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By J. E. CONANT, D.D.
Bible Teacher and Evangelist

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By

J. E. CONANT, D.D.

Bible Teacher and Evangelist

Author of

"Why the Pastor Failed," "Is It Scholarly to be Orthodox?" "Is Atonement by Substitution Reasonable?" "Divine Dynamite," "The Church, the Schools, and Evolution"

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

THE first great passion of the Lord Jesus Christ was, and is, for the souls of men. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." In his intercessory prayer, recorded in John 17, he prays not alone for those who are with him, but for all those who, through their word, should believe on his Name, that they might be sanctified as he was sanctified, in order that the world might know that the Father had sent him into the world.

The Great Commission was not given to the Christian ministry, but to the Christian Church. It seems quite clear that when the Master met his disciples on the mountain in Galilee, "above five hundred brethren" (1 Cor. 15:6) were together in obedience to his summons. It was to this group, probably containing all the avowed disciples of the Master at the time of his crucifixion—at least all who stood the shock of that crucifixion and maintained the integrity of their faith beyond it—that he gave the Great Commission. The evangelization of men is therefore the task of the whole Church.

Judged in the light of Acts 1:8, the duty of the Church in bearing witness to Christ for the purpose of persuading men to believe on Christ was to be continuous and simultaneous; that is, it was to go on continuously and everywhere at once. The Com-

mission certainly contemplates a continuous Church activity until the consummation of the Age. The very genius of the Gospel Christ gave his disciples to proclaim necessitates the dominance of the Christian passion for souls. Wherever the Holy Spirit resides in the life of a believer, he is constantly taking the things of Christ and showing them unto men.

The author of this volume will point out the fact that it is not the task of the ministry to do the soul-winning work of the Christian body. The Holy Spirit has given some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, *for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ.* Surely no right conception of the Christian ministry can degenerate into an itching ear for entertainment. An evangelical ministry without an evangelistic passion is a moral impossibility. To declare a church evangelical and to confess it non-evangelistic is to proclaim a living lie. A loving passion for Christ inevitably eventuates in a living passion for men.

In a very vital sense all the problems which attend our organizations within the local church and within the larger grouping of churches easily find their solution in an intense evangelistic activity, and an intense evangelistic atmosphere. Pettiness, selfishness, estrangements, prejudices, bitternesses, seem impossible in the presence of the miracle-working God whose power and presence are fre-

quently demonstrated in the greatest of all miracles, the regeneration of souls. There is a melting tenderness of heart, a warm response of spirit, a quickened stimulation of mind, and an irresistible surge of fellowship proceeding from the joy of salvation as it flows constantly, frequently, into the lives of those who are being redeemed. Wherever this atmosphere is guarded and maintained it will happen in the churches now as it happened following Pentecost. The Church will be all together in one place, they will pray with one accord, with singleness of heart they will break bread, great joy will be upon the people, and with mighty power the ministers will give their testimony concerning the resurrection from the dead.

There can be no substitute for this primal passion of the Christian individual and of the Christian Church. Without it the ministry becomes formal, the Church cold, the world indifferent. A passionless ministry can never arouse a cold Church, and a cold Church can never witness convincingly to an indifferent world. The Christian Church to-day needs a revival of praying, preaching, and personal testimony to the intent of reaching and winning the lost to a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This book which Dr. Conant has written should have a wide reading, for it will without doubt encourage just those results. Profound in exposition, sane in Scriptural application, wise in practical suggestion, the book proceeds not alone from the pen, but from the heart of this devoted servant of God

who is giving himself unceasingly to the work of the ministry.

His work as an evangelist and Bible teacher is deepened and enriched by the fact that he has also been a pastor and writes as he labors in the keen appreciation of both pastoral and Church problems.

I bespeak for the book, as I anticipate for it, a wide and thoughtful reading.

J. C. Massee.

Tremont Temple, Boston.

PREFACE

OF books on evangelism there are many. Nearly every phase of the subject has been so thoroughly, Scripturally, and even exhaustively covered that another book added to the already long and excellent list seems almost out of place. And it would, indeed, be altogether out of place but for an undoubted lack of emphasis in much if not almost all that has been written on two most fundamental and vital aspects of evangelism.

One of those fundamentals has to do with the question as to just what, precisely, the New Testament program of evangelism is. The author does not know of a single discussion of the subject that puts the responsibility for evangelism altogether where the New Testament places it—on *every individual Christian*. Much has been written on individual work for the lost, it is true, and many who have read have been stirred up to undertake the work, but there has been little if any systematic exposition of those Scriptures which set forth the divine program of evangelism which is summed up in the Great Commission.

It is popularly supposed that "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" is an appeal to enter the ministry, and especially to go as a missionary. The vast majority of Christians have never dreamed that it is a *per-*

sonal, individual command to *every* child of God to go into his own *personal* world and do soul-winning witnessing to *every creature*. And it is out of this misconception that the popular but utterly unscriptural phrase, "If we cannot *go,* we can *send* some one in our place," has been coined. But the truth is, we are never told to "either go or send." It is God's prerogative to send; not ours. We are commanded to do one thing only, and that is to *GO*. And that is a command that cannot be obeyed by *proxy;* it can be obeyed only in *person*. And so it is a command to every Christian to go with the Gospel testimony to every lost one in *his own personal world,* as well as a command for those who are providentially separated unto that work to go out into every corner of the geographical world.

But this is not the popular conception of evangelism. It is generally understood to consist principally of formal, public Gospel discourses, delivered in some meeting-place into which the lost have been invited in the hope that the preacher's message will result in their salvation. The New Testament, however, as illustrated by the events of Pentecost, the Church's pattern day for the whole Age, makes public and formal witnessing the *climax* and *culmination* of that private and informal witnessing which the Great Commission commands each Christian to do in his own immediate personal world. This alone is the New Testament program of evangelism. And the Church will never reach the lost in any significant numbers until this pro-

gram is followed, in the power of the Spirit, with fidelity and exactness.

The other fundamental of the evangelistic program which the author feels has had much less emphasis than it needs is the fact that while the Great Commission is sufficient *authority* for every-member evangelism, it is not and cannot become sufficient *motive*. We may be authorized, and urged, and commanded to take the Gospel in person to the lost, but the *power* to go does not lie in a command; it lies in a Person.

It is true that all who write on this theme lay more or less emphasis on the need of the Holy Spirit's power, but the author has never met with any discussion of evangelism that emphasizes the divine dynamics quite as the attempt is made to emphasize them in these pages. It is not *we* who win the lost by the *help* of Christ, it is *Christ himself* who does the soul-winning through the lives and lips of yielded disciples. And so it is not so much a question either of equipment or lack of it, as it is a question of his absolute possession and control, by the Holy Spirit, of whatever equipment we may have. When the Holy Spirit controls a Christian, he will be constrained, impelled, borne along, to go after the lost, command or no command. The great essential, therefore, in soul-winning is to be completely possessed, through the fulness of the Spirit, by him whose life on earth it was to seek and to save the lost.

Much is being said these days about the life of

victory in Christ. The real evidence of victorious living lies not in an experience of joy, no matter how wonderful and continuous, but in what the indwelling life of the Victor does in and through us. "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21)—that is the life of victory, because the Victor himself lives it within us. And when the life of him whose passion for the lost led him to the death of the cross is lived in us, the same passion will become the normal attitude of our lives toward the lost, for we shall have become a continuous "living sacrifice" that they might live. This is at once both the test and the evidence that the crucified and risen life of the victorious One is being lived in us to the point of personal victory. There can be no victorious living apart from a spontaneous and all-consuming passion for continuous personal evangelism.

These, then, are the two main emphases of the following pages. It is not the mechanics but the dynamics of individual work for the lost that we are to study. We are to discover that every Christian, without exception, is to do this work; then we are to learn that no Christian, no matter what his capacity and training, can possibly do it; then we are to find that he whose commands are always his enablings is the only one who can do it, and that he will and does do it through every yielded disciple; and we are also to see the vital relationship between this work and all public evangelism.

The whole Church is in a most serious condition. Not only have we not been increasing as fast as the

population, but some of the larger denominations have been reporting actual net losses in some late years. Public evangelism seems to be occupying an increasingly small and less vital place in the life of the Church, while worldliness and apostasy are taking such a hold on the very vitals of Church life that private evangelism is fast disappearing. If present history is to be reversed and the victorious history of other days repeated, the Church must return to a literal obedience to the divine Program, and surrender to utter dependence on the divine power. To this end these pages have been written.

This book goes forth with the prayer that through its reading a great company of the Lord's people may allow the Holy Spirit to thrust them forth into a ripened harvest.

J. E. Conant.

Chicago, Ill., January, 1922.

PART I

THE DIVINE PROGRAM

INTRODUCTORY

MANY an earnest and consecrated pastor is heartbroken over the failure of his people to reach the lost for Christ in any significant numbers.

More than once has such a pastor gone from his knees to his pulpit with a heart surcharged with his own passion for a lost humanity, and a divinely given yearning that his people might be possessed by the same passion.

More than once has he set before them the call to the work of soul-winning until it has seemed as though no one could fail to respond.

More than once has he risen to such an intensity of appeal that it has seemed as though the Son of God himself was pouring out his own yearning for a lost world through human heart and lips.

And as he has pleaded with his people, he has seen them rise to heights of inspired and enthusiastic resolve. He has seen the evidence, in their earnest faces, of a determination to give their lives as never before to the work of soul-winning. Indeed, he has seen many of them give solemn public pledge before God that seeking to win the lost to Christ should be the main purpose of their lives

from that day forward. And then as he has watched them leave the service and scatter into the field, he has anticipated such results from that hour as the church had never before seen.

But he was doomed to sad and bitter disappointment. The enthusiastic resolutions of that holy hour seemed to vanish ere the next Sunday, like a mist before the rising sun.

Perhaps he could detect a little increased activity on the part of a pitiably small handful of his most earnest people, but he was compelled to acknowledge that little, if anything, of increased results in soul-winning ever came from that service which had seemed to promise so much.

The pastor had failed!

Perhaps this was another failure!

Why had he failed?

He was certain there was nothing consciously wrong between himself and his Lord. He was sure of the Holy Spirit's leading and enabling in selecting his theme and making his appeal. He was convinced that in his longing for a church enthusiastically seeking after the lost he was never more honestly desirous of the glory of God.

And as for his people, he was certain they were God's children. He felt sure their response to his appeal was out of a genuine love for Christ and a lost world. And he was convinced that they went out of that service with a purpose to win the lost as honest as any company of Christians ever had. And yet little or nothing had resulted from it!

Why had that pastor failed? What had he left undone? What more could he do? There certainly was a reason for that failure, but what was it?

Was not the trouble something like this? The appeal of that consecrated pastor was completely successful in securing the honest purpose from his people to win the lost to Christ, and his people were thoroughly sincere in their determination to give themselves to that work; but as they turned from the church door and faced their task, they were confronted by a great field—perhaps one that spread out over a large city, and the very bigness of their task bewildered them. They were not only willing to go after the lost, but were enthusiastic in their anticipation of results, but where, in all that great field, were they to begin?

Perhaps some of them did try to begin—somewhere, but the indefinite anywhereness of their task, the lack of responsibility for any definite section of the field, and the sense of being unharnessed and alone in the open, first produced discouragement because the task seemed too big for them, then led to delay because it was all so indefinite, and finally brought defeat.

It was not lack of a *purpose* so much as lack of a *program* that accomplished that defeat.

A purpose may start us toward a task, and may even get us at work on it, but we can never be kept at work very long without a program.

When men undertake to run a business of their

own, they carry it on according to a system, a method, a program, even to the last detail; and the Great Commission absolutely demands that the soul-winning work of the Church be organized and carried on according to a program. And when we make even a cursory study of the Commission and all the related passages we find not only what the divine Program for the work of soul-winning is, but what the divine Purpose was in giving the Church that program, and also what is the source and nature of the divine Power by which the program is to be carried out. We shall therefore relate our study to these three thoughts.

CHAPTER I

SCRIPTURE EXPOSITION

AS we study the Lord's Program for his Church, we shall want to know two or three very definite things about it.

We shall need, first of all, to know what the Program is.

We shall then be glad to know if there is a New Testament illustration of the way the Lord expects it to be worked out.

We shall also need to know what provision the Lord has made to keep it in operation throughout the Church Age.

The New Testament furnishes abundant information on all these points, and we therefore turn to what it says.

I. The Program Unfolded

As to what the Program is, we turn naturally to the words of Christ, and especially to what he said to his disciples just before his crucifixion, and also between his resurrection and ascension; for here, if anywhere, we are likely to find the sum of all his previous instruction and the outline of his purposes concerning the future of his Church. And as we turn to the passages that contain Christ's last words, we are not disappointed.

THE CHURCH'S MISSION

If we set the pre-crucifixion and pre-ascension words of Christ all down by themselves and give them careful study, we cannot fail to notice that the word "witness" is the key to all of them.

And if we analyze them we shall find that witnessing is to be the main work of the whole Church in the whole world throughout the whole Age.[1]

Notice how this is all summed up in the Great Commission as Mark[2] gives it to us, with one phrase from Matthew added.[3]

"Go ye" is a command to every Christian; that is, to the whole Church.

"Into all the world" certainly includes every Christian's personal world, for it takes all the personal worlds of all Christians scattered abroad over the earth added together to cover the geographical world. That is, the whole Church is to go into the whole world.

"And preach the Gospel," if it means anything, must certainly mean to witness, or to tell the Good News of salvation through Christ, and this defines the central activity of the Church. That is, witnessing is the main work of the whole Church throughout the whole world; while "to every creature" makes it the individual work of every Christian to every unsaved one.

And then Matthew adds Christ's promise, "Lo,

[1]Dr. Arthur T. Pierson says that witnessing is the "whole work of the whole Church for the whole Age."
[2]Mark 6:15. [3]Matt. 28:20.

I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the age,"[1] which clearly indicates that this work is to be continued throughout the whole Age.

The Commission according to Mark, therefore, with one phrase from Matthew, tells us that *witnessing* is the *main work* of the *whole Church* in the *whole world* throughout the *whole Age*.

Christ also said just before he ascended that this witnessing was to be done "both" in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to "the uttermost part of the earth,"[2] which means, according to Dr. Henry C. Mabie, that the Lord's people are to witness, not consecutively from one place to another, but simultaneously in every part of earth at once.

THE CHURCH'S MESSAGE

When we turn to that phase of the Commission set forth by Luke, we have the content of our testimony given to us.

You recall that at the close of the day of Christ's resurrection, after he had appeared to the two Emmaus disciples, he suddenly appeared in the midst of the disciples who were gathered together in Jerusalem discussing the news of the resurrection.

After showing his startled disciples his hands and his feet, and eating a piece of broiled fish to convince them that it was really himself, he reminded them of how he had told them of all these things before his crucifixion, and of how he had simply been fulfilling what the Scriptures had fore-

[1]Matt. 28:20 (Gr.). [2]Acts 1:8.

told, and then he gave them the content of their message—and ours—to a lost world.[1]

"Ye are witnesses of *these things,*" said Christ, which refers back to what he had just been saying. And as we analyze what he said, we find that our witnessing has to do with three distinct themes:

First, we are to set forth the testimony of Scripture to Christ, and show how all the things to which Scripture witnesses concerning him either have been or will yet be fulfilled.

Again, we are to bear witness to his unique sufferings, his atoning death, and his triumphant resurrection.

Still further, we are to tell everywhere the Good News of the remission of sins for all who repent and believe.

Then in the last words he spoke before he ascended, Christ summed up the message of the Church in a single sentence, when he said: "Ye shall be witnesses unto *Me.*" Not simply to a lot of information about him, however useful in its place, but to Christ himself.

THE CHURCH'S MOTIVES

In immediate connection with the content of our testimony is set down Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit,[2] who is to be our enablement in our testimony, and his explicit command to the disciples to wait till the Holy Spirit had come to begin his ministry in them before they should start out on their ministry of witnessing.

[1]Luke 24:36-48. [2]Luke 24:49.

This instruction of Christ's to wait for the Holy Spirit is of the utmost significance, for it indicates beyond all question that we not only will not, but even cannot obey the Great Commission apart from the power of the Spirit.

This is set forth in symbol in a most significant way in the details that John tells us of what happened on the evening of the resurrection day.[1]

As Christ suddenly appeared in the midst of the assembled disciples without a door being opened, the first thing he did was to show them his wounded hands and side—the visible evidences of his atoning work. This was to be the heart of their testimony to him.

Then he commanded them to go, even as his Father had sent him. This was his command to go with their testimony.

But he does not stop there. The content of their testimony had been indicated, and they had been commanded to go with it, but Christ knew they would never go simply under the impulse of a command. So he breathed on them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit"—a symbolic action looking forward to Pentecost. And so imperative was his instruction just before he ascended to wait for the empowering of the Spirit that we know, beyond peradventure, that successful witnessing apart from that empowering is an utter impossibility.

[1]John 20:19-23.

PRAYER AND POWER

There is one other thing that lies behind all this. While it does not appear in the Great Commission in so many words, yet it saturates the whole ministry of Christ, and he also urges his disciples to it by example, exhortation, and command. That fundamental thing is prayer. The mechanics of the most perfect program possible, even of a program that God himself lays out, are utterly worthless apart from the divine dynamics. And prayer alone makes it possible for us to be taken hold upon by the divine dynamics. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint," said Christ.[1] Only so will they always be living channels of that message of an atoning Saviour from sin, thereby living in constant obedience to the Great Commission.

THE COMPLETE CHURCH PROGRAM

The Great Commission, therefore, when we sum it up, is a personal command to every Christian to go into every nook and corner of his personal world, and seek, by witnessing in the power of the Holy Spirit to the Good News of God's saving grace through the shed blood of Christ, to win every lost soul in his personal world to salvation. We are also so to scatter over the inhabited earth, as the providence of God leads and opens the way, that the whole world will be continuously and simultaneously evangelized. With this agrees every pas-

[1]Luke 18:1.

sage that has any bearing on the mission of the Church. This defines with the utmost clearness what the Lord's Program for his Church is.

II. The Program Illustrated

The next thing we want to know is whether the Lord has given us a historical illustration of this Program actually at work, and we do not need to look far to find one. For the Holy Spirit gave us the pattern of the manner in which this Program is to be carried out in the events immediately surrounding the Day of Pentecost. These events were the divinely executed pattern of what the Lord purposed to keep doing through the Church during the whole Church Age. To find the divine significance of these events, therefore, will be to have set before us what the Church is expected to be doing to-day. And as added details unfold before us as we watch how the Holy Spirit led and empowered the disciples to carry out Christ's command exactly as he gave it, no doubt can be left in our minds as to precisely what that Program is.

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

As the foundation and preparation for all the Holy Spirit was to do in the disciples and for the lost when he began his official ministry on earth, a period of time was given over entirely to prayer. This period was ten days in this instance, but the number of days means nothing except that it was that long before the Holy Spirit came to begin his official mission. The whole emphasis must be on

the praying. This alone could prepare their hearts for what God was to do in them and through them, and it surely could not have been altogether without some bearing on the lost to whom they were to witness, even though the Holy Spirit had not yet come. At any rate, it is certain that prayer, since the Holy Spirit has come, opens the pathway both for the divine preparation of the Christian's heart and the divine operation in the sinner's heart.

POWER FOR WITNESSING

Then came the events of Pentecost.[1] The Lord had already indicated that he intended the disciples to do their witnessing in a systematic fashion when he divided the field into the broad districts of Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and "the uttermost part of the earth," and directed them to witness simultaneously in all of them. And so it could not have been without this in view that he commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to start them on this work, for at Jerusalem were living "men out of every nation under heaven,"[2] making it possible to witness simultaneously to representatives of every district he had named, from Jerusalem to "the uttermost part of the earth." This providence is very striking.

Then when the Holy Spirit came, took possession of the yielded disciples, and began working out through them the divine Program, they were all so possessed by the Spirit as to be empowered to speak in the languages of "every nation under heaven."

[1]Acts 2. [2]Acts 2:5.

The direct connection between this miracle and the Great Commission cannot be missed. It lies on the surface. The disciples were enabled by it to begin witnessing at once and simultaneously to every nation representatively, from Jerusalem to those farthest away. By it the Holy Spirit indicated what he intended should actually be done in all the nations themselves, as soon as the way was providentially opened for the disciples to reach them, and what he intended should continue to be done throughout the Age.

INFORMAL WITNESSING BY ALL

The next step was to go to the lost with their testimony. They were therefore impelled by the Holy Spirit to go where the lost were. Note this well. They did not go to some public meeting-place and invite the people to come and hear their testimony, they took their testimony to the people.

As soon as the marvel of their miraculous speech was noised abroad, great crowds from everywhere came together and listened with amazement, as the entire one hundred and twenty disciples, both men and women, praised God and witnessed to his mighty works in at least fifteen different languages.

Notice that they were not preaching, for there were many among them—the women, for instance, as well as others—who were not called of God to public preaching and teaching. They were *witnessing,* and they were *all* witnessing in the midst of a great company of the lost.

How long this continued there is no means of telling, but the deep interest it aroused evidently produced such consciousness and conviction of sin that finally a climax of decision became possible.

FORMAL WITNESSING BY ONE

Then it was, and not before, that the Holy Spirit introduced the next step in the divine Program. He selected Peter, set him forth before a multitude of sinners made eager to listen by the private witnessing, and spoke through him the marvelous message of that first sermon of this present Age. This proved to be such a climax to the previous witnessing as resulted in the decision of three thousand of that crowd to receive the crucified but risen and ascended Jesus as their Messiah and Saviour.

Our misconceptions of this perfectly plain statement of events have worked havoc with our understanding of the Great Commission. It is so widely imagined that those three thousand converts were brought to Christ by Peter's sermon alone that many almost think it is in the New Testament in so many words. But nothing could be farther from the truth. It was the *private* witnessing of all the disciples, reaching its climax and culmination in the *public* witnessing of one disciple, that brought the results of that day. In other words, Peter's sermon was the climax of that which had preceded; and if the private witnessing had not preceded the public witnessing, there is not the least likelihood that any such results would have followed.

WITNESSING TO CHRIST

Now notice the theme of Peter's testimony. After explaining that this marvelous manifestation was of God, he begins immediately to preach the Christ whom they had crucified and God had raised from the dead. And he sets forth his theme with such masterly,—yes, such superhuman—skill, that we are forced to the conclusion that either the Holy Spirit spoke the message through the yielded disciple, or else that Peter was more than a man.

The Messiahship and Lordship of this Jesus whom they had slain was the thing he started out to prove. But he did not mention it until he had proved it, and then it was irresistible.

The proof consisted of three arguments. First he appealed to the miracles and wonders and signs which God wrought in their presence, and with which his audience was familiar, and as he did so he referred to him through whom God wrought them as a "man," thus avoiding what must certainly have stirred up their prejudices and closed their minds to all he was yet to say.

Then he turns to Scripture exposition, speaking first of the death of this "man" and of their complicity in that death, and then showing what Scripture says about the resurrection of their promised Messiah, proving that the Messiah could not be held by death because he was the "Holy One" of God. This very skilfully left the inference that their Messiah must have died or it would be impossible for God to raise him from the dead, and opened

the way for him to identify this "man" who had been slain with their Messiah. Then he boldly announces that this Jesus whom they had crucified God had raised from the dead, and that they all were witnesses of that fact. But he does not yet announce him as their Messiah.

He next turns to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit which are taking place before them at that moment, and testifies that this Jesus whom God had raised from the dead had also been exalted to the right hand of God, and that he was the one who had shed forth the manifestation of the Holy Spirit which had so amazed them.

The conclusion was inevitable. This same Jesus whom they had crucified, God had made both Lord and Messiah.

The result was that whatever consciousness of sin and personal concern had already been aroused through the personal testimony of the one hundred and twenty was now brought to so sharp a climax that it required decision of some sort. They were so pricked in the heart that they began to ask, "What shall we do?"

Then Peter and the rest of them did such personal work among them as resulted in three thousand of them accepting this Jesus as their Messiah, and publicly confessing their acceptance by baptism.

Notice carefully that Christ crucified and raised again was the theme of Peter's testimony, and that he gave his testimony altogether in the enabling of

the Holy Spirit. Thus far the divine Program has been followed in detail.

WITNESSING EVERYWHERE

It will be recalled that later on the disciples failed to follow Christ in his command to scatter abroad and tell the Good News everywhere, and so the Lord let a little persecution slip through the aperture of his permission and drove them out.

The record of this persecution and its results, which the Holy Spirit has written for us, is most significant. He tells us that they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Gospel, *"except the apostles."*[1] That is, the "laymen" went everywhere like living firebrands, setting things on fire wherever they went, while the "clergy" stayed behind. The way in which the Holy Spirit has recorded this bit of early history, as well as the history itself from which the record was made, gives us unmistakable evidence that the Lord intends the rank and file of the Church to go everywhere the Lord's providence places them, bearing constant witness to the saving grace of God.

We are now where we can look back on the historical illustration of the divine Program. We can now see precisely how the Lord intends the Great Commission should be carried out. The one main business of the Church is to be *witnessing;* the witnessing is to be both *private* and *public,* the private to be done by *all,* and the public to be done by those

[1]Acts 8:1.

whom the Holy Spirit selects; the private witnessing is intended to bring about such a condition of heart as shall open the way for a *climax of decision* under the influence of the public witnessing; the theme of the testimony is to be Christ himself in all that he is and does for the salvation of lost men; the witnessing is to be undertaken only at the leading and under the power and enabling of the Holy Spirit; and the spirit of prayer and praise is to saturate everything that is done. This is the exact meaning of the Great Commission, some of the important details being given added significance in the historical events we have been studying.

III. The Program Perpetuated

We are now much interested to know what provision the Lord has made to keep this Program in successful operation throughout the Church Age.

Our information on this subject we find, quite naturally, in the very heart of that great body of truth which the Lord gave us through Paul, the great Apostle to the Church.

CHRIST'S GIFTS TO HIS CHURCH

In Ephesians 4:11-16 Paul is setting forth the gifts which the ascended Christ gave his Church, and what he gave them for. Among these gifts are not only apostles and prophets, but also evangelists and pastors and teachers.

The reason he set these gifts in his Church comes out with great clearness when we consult the vari-

ous versions. In the Authorized Version, the meaning of verse 12 is obscured. It tells us that apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers were given "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry," leaving the impression on the reader that the "perfecting of the saints" and the "work of the ministry" are two separate and distinct phases of the one work of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers.

But the 1911 Bible says that these gifts were given to the Church for "the perfecting of the saints for the doing of service."

Rotherham puts it, "With a view to the fitting of the saints for the work of ministering."

Conybeare and Howson translate it, "For the perfecting of God's people in their appointed service."

Weymouth gives it, "In order fully to equip his people for the work of serving."

And Dr. Arthur T. Pierson says that these gifts were given to the Church "in order to perfect the saints in serviceableness."

It is clear, therefore, that the Lord's people have an appointed ministry or service, and that he has given apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers to perfect them in that service.

And when we follow this passage further to learn what that service is, all translations agree that it is the building up of the body of Christ, or the growth of the Church, and that this ministry is to

continue until the Church comes to a full-grown man.[1]

Of what this growth consists will be brought out with unmistakable clearness if we analyze the nature of our service.

HOW THE CHURCH GROWS

Both evangelists and pastors and teachers have been set in the Church to perfect the Lord's people in the doing of a certain service. What kind of service is it?

It must be such as will build up the body of Christ, which is a spiritual body, and so it must be *spiritual* service.

To whom is this service to be rendered?

It cannot be turned inward and rendered to the Church alone with no reference to those outside, for it would then be selfish and would cease to be spiritual. It would therefore be incapable of building up the body of Christ. It must be rendered not simply to those inside the Church, but especially to those *outside*.

But what sort of spiritual service can be rendered to those outside the Church?

It must be such a service as will meet their spiritual needs.

What are their spiritual needs?

They are spiritually "dead in trespasses and sins," and so their one all-inclusive spiritual need while they are in that condition is *life*.

[1] Eph. 4:12-16.

What sort of service will meet that need?

Such service as will result in bringing them out of spiritual death into spiritual life. In the nature of the case, we can render them no other spiritual service until we have first rendered this one. Nothing of physical value can be done for those who are physically dead except to bring them to physical life, and it is equally impossible to do anything of spiritual value for those who are spiritually dead except to bring them to spiritual life. There must be spiritual life first, and then spiritual values will become real and tangible.

What kind of service will result in bringing spiritual life to the dead?

The kind that brings to them him who was dead and is alive for evermore—him who is "the resurrection and the life" for all who are dead in trespasses and sins, and that leads them to receive life by receiving him.

What kind of service will do this?

Witnessing to him who is the Lord of life, in such compelling earnestness and spiritual power as will induce the spiritually dead to receive the life he offers.

Will this kind of service build up the body of Christ?

It is the only kind that will. For it is certainly the only service that will build up the Church in numbers, and it is also the only service that will produce real and lasting spiritual growth in the members. Other forms of service may temporarily

stimulate a church to certain kinds of activity, but only the work of soul-winning will continuously build a church in real vitality. All over the land to-day there are churches that are practically powerless and fruitless because they are giving themselves over to multiplied forms of service which are not a direct appeal to the lost to receive Christ. The church that makes that appeal its one great business is always prosperous and powerful, and its growth is both certain in numbers and symmetrical in spiritual character.

It is as plainly taught in this passage as language can make it that the Lord gave evangelists and pastors and teachers to his people to train and perfect them in the work of soul-winning. Pastors and evangelists are not appointed to be the professional soul-winners of the Church, but "for the perfecting of God's people in *their* appointed service" of witnessing and soul-winning. The pastorate is not a religious lectureship; it is a spiritual generalship. And an evangelist is not to go to a field and reap the harvest for a church while they look on and watch him do it, but he is to lead, instruct, and direct the harvesters as they go out into the field and gather in the harvest themselves.

THE PASTOR AS AN OVERSEER

There is another term in the New Testament that brings out this truth with great clearness. The Lord has said to all pastors through Paul, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,

over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*."[1] Thayer's Greek lexicon defines the word from which "overseer" comes as, "a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly"; a "superintendent."

The word also carries the meaning of watch-care and shepherding, as a shepherd feeds and cares for his flock.

This defines the double work of the pastor. He is to feed his people and give them such watch-care as will make them strong and vigorous for their service of soul-winning, and he is to be their overseer, or superintendent, in that service, seeing that they do that work and guiding them wherever they may need it, that they may do it successfully.

This twofold function of the pastoral office also comes out in the list of Christ's gifts to his Church which we have been studying. After naming apostles, prophets and evangelists, he names the one who is to have direct and continuous charge of a local body of believers, and calls him a "pastor and teacher." As a pastor, or shepherd, as that word means, he is to feed the people and give them such watchful care as shall keep them fit *for* their appointed service; as a teacher he is to give them not simply theoretical but especially practical instruction to the point of success *in* their appointed service.

That the individual members may become successful in winning the lost is therefore the one all-inclusive reason why pastors were given to the

[1]Acts 20:28.

Church. The shepherding and the superintending both have that as their main object.

THE PASTOR'S MAIN BUSINESS

The conclusion is inevitable. The main business of the pastor is not the preparation and delivery of sermons and addresses so much as the development, whether by sermon or by any other method, of every member in his church into a soul-winner. His sermons—at least those to Christians—ought always to have this in view.

Not that either the pastor or his people have no teaching ministry which it is possible to distinguish from simple witnessing, but that all such ministry is to have preparation for soul-winning witnessing, rather than the simple impartation of instruction and information, as its ultimate object. Such witnessing to Christ as will bring the lost to him is the main stream of Christian service into which all other streams of Christian instruction and activity must be made to flow. Indeed, witnessing to Christ is the very essence of the building up ministry of the Word, for he who is the theme of the Word is the Bread of God by which we grow in grace and knowledge. And growth is both certain and normal only when in the strength of that Bread we go out to the lost and give them also to eat. Food is for strength, and strength is for service, and if the strength we get from that Bread is not used in service, there will be little building up in the "most holy faith." In the teaching ministry

of the pastor, therefore, he is to direct it all toward securing in his people ever-increasing results in soul-winning.

One of the most practical as well as successful ways of doing this is the method a factory superintendent would use with a beginner who knew little or nothing about his job. He would actually do the work and teach the beginner how. He would encourage him to do it himself, and help him in the uncertain places until he learned how.

Precisely so the Lord has given every pastor to his Church that he may train the members in soul-winning, even to the point of going right out on to the field with them and doing it by their side, or helping them to do it until they learn how, using the skilled ones in turn to help train beginners, until there is a church full of skilled and successful soul-winners.

No one can ever learn how to win the lost by studying books or listening to sermons and addresses. He can fill his mind with the Word of God by study, as he certainly should do, and he can get suggestions from others as to how to deal with various classes of the lost, but when it comes to actually knowing how to win a soul to Christ, he can learn how only by going out into the field and doing it.

WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICE?

By this time some reader is asking if social service has no place in the work of the Church.

That depends altogether on what is meant by social service. There is so much hazy and nebulous talk about it, even among social service experts, that the only way to reach any satisfactory answer is to get back to the definitions of fundamental things and then do a little analyzing.

The Church is a distinct and unique gift of God to the world. It occupies a place in the world that nothing else can possibly occupy, and the Church itself can occupy the place of nothing else whatsoever.

More than two thousand years before the Church, God gave mankind human Government. Its place in the world is also unique and very definite, and it can neither let anything else come into its place, nor take the place of anything else.

Each of these institutions has its own divinely given task to perform, and each one functions in its own distinct way.

The mission of the state is to be a terror to evildoers against human temporal welfare,[1] and it functions, especially under democracy, through its citizenship.

The mission of the Church is to proclaim forgiveness, through the blood of Christ, to sinners against God, and it functions through its membership.

Now there are, broadly speaking, two distinct forms of human welfare work being advocated today under the one name of social service. Few if

[1] Gen. 9:5, 6. Rom. 13:1-7.

any of its advocates seem to realize this, but the distinction can be seen at a glance as soon as attention is called to it.

There is the kind that has to do with equity, righteousness, and justice in human relationships. The official Social Service Program of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, with its sixteen items, is an example.

There is also the kind that has to do with the direct and immediate relief of human suffering, especially that caused by sickness, poverty, misfortune and like conditions.

Now recall that the state is set in the world to be a terror to evildoers against temporal human welfare. How can it properly function and accomplish this mission? It can do so only by the administration of equity, righteousness, and justice. This is precisely why God gave to Noah, earth's first divinely appointed governor, the sword of the magistrate, and instructed him to administer human government on the divine behalf, on the principles of justice and righteousness; and it is also why these same principles were reiterated and expanded in defining the functions of government in the 13th chapter of Romans. The first kind of social service named above is, therefore, the mission of the state alone, and the Church as such has no functions to perform in that realm. Every Christian as a citizen ought always to act on principles of righteousness and equity toward his fellow-citizens, and to help his government to act on the same principles,

but the Church as a corporate body has no mission in the sphere of *officially* seeking to get righteousness and equity administered.

Recall again that the Church is set in the world to win the lost to Christ. Anything that will open the way for more effective witnessing to Christ is therefore not out of harmony with the mission of the Church, provided it has not already been delegated to the state as a matter of equity and justice. That kind of social service that is in the nature of philanthropy is, consequently, not out of place in the work of the Church, provided always that it is used as a direct and immediate means of opening the way for more effective witnessing to Christ than would otherwise be possible. And so the second kind of social service named above may properly be included in the mission of the Church so long as it is used as a direct means of opening the way to soul-winning. The moment it descends to a mere sympathetic and humanitarian relief of human need, with no reference to direct soul-winning work, it ceases to be a proper activity of the Church as such.

"The poor always ye have with you" (John 13:8), said Christ when he was on earth, and he himself had great compassion for the sick and afflicted. But you will notice that he only *began* at the blind man's eyes, the lame man's feet, and the deaf man's ears, and that then he *kept on going,* until he got to their sin and gave them forgiveness. Soul-winning witnessing to Christ is the only possible war-

rant for even this kind of social service being done by the Church. Indeed, it is very striking, to say the least, that so far as example goes there is no New Testament warrant for philanthropic work by the Church in its corporate capacity except to those within the Church itself.

There is one thing about social service of every kind that must never be forgotten. Like civilization and education, it is but the *by-product of evangelism.* Just as a by-product is impossible, therefore, apart from the main product, so permanent civic and social betterment is utterly impossible apart from the winning of the lost to Christ. And as the only way to get more by-product is to produce more of the main product, just so the only way to get an increase in any kind of social service whatever is to intensify the work of evangelism. And so those churches that are turning aside to social service as a *program* are doing the very thing that tends to kill all forms of social service from the earth.

The main work of the whole Church in the whole world throughout the whole Age is witnessing to the salvation there is in Christ. Anything outside of this forfeits the promised presence and blessing of him who said, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the Age." (Matt. 28:20 Gr.)

CHAPTER II

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

WE have before us now the details of the divine Program, which Christ gave to his disciples before he went away, and which the Holy Spirit put into actual operation when he came.

Can this ancient Program be given practical application and put into successful operation in the twentieth century?

Absolutely!

Will it meet the complicated conditions, and function in the ever-increasing maze of modern life?

Nothing else but this Program will do so!

Will it cure the Church of her increasing ills, revitalize her message, and bring back the drifting masses to her ministry?

This is the only Program that can do it!

For at the heart of this Program lies the one word *"Go!"* and world-conditions can never become so complicated, nor the condition of the Church become so bad, that that command cannot be obeyed, when the Church yields to the power of the Holy Spirit, exactly as it was obeyed in the early days of Church history.

When we begin to *go* in obedience to the divine command and in the fulness of the divine power, then the lost of the world will begin to *come*. We

can never expect the world to come to us *for* the message; we must go to them *with* the message. And so in the nature of the case it must be individual work for individuals.

I. We Must Go Individually

If any further Scripture proof were needed to substantiate this, there is great abundance.

Take the Great Commission itself. It is commonly understood to mean, "Come ye out of all the community into our church and hear the Gospel preached." But it reads instead, "*Go* ye into all the world [your world, your community as well as all the earth], and *preach the Gospel* [proclaim the Good Tidings] to *every creature*."[1]

There is no command in all the New Testament for a sinner to go to church after the Gospel, but there are multiplied commands for the Church to take the Gospel to the sinner. Of course it is cause for great rejoicing when the lost do come to church and hear the Gospel, but the responsibility of every Christian is not to bring the lost to the Gospel but to take the Gospel to the lost.

Even the Old Testament anticipates the Great Commission when it exclaims, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that *bringeth* good tidings,"[2] not "of them that bring the people to hear the Good Tidings."

"Behold a sower *went forth* to sow"[3]—forth into the *field*. The field will never come to us for the

[1]Mark 16:15. [2]Isaiah 52:7. [3]Matt. 13:3.

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seed, so we must take the seed to the field. The Christian is the sower, the Word of salvation is the seed, and the world is the field. Every Christian is to *take* the Gospel—the seed, to the lost in the world—the field. Just as a farmer, if he is ever to get a harvest, must sow his seed in the field and not stand on his own doorstep and sow his own door-yard knee-deep with wheat, so the Lord's people, if they expect to get a harvest, must take the seed of the Word out into the world and sow it in the field, and not do all their sowing in the door-yard of their own church services.

"Launch out into the *deep,* and let down your nets for a draught."[1] The Lord has called us to be fishers of men, and if we are to take a great catch we must leave the shore and the baited hook and line and get out into deep water where the multitudes of fish are. We cannot build a finely appointed spiritual fishing station on a prominent corner, and then expect the fish to come hurrying in from everywhere to be caught, even when we put on a special fishing campaign. If we are to catch men for Christ we must go where they are.

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest,"[2] that is, *harvesters* into the *field.* The Lord never commanded us to pray for a harvest! But why not? Because the harvest is always white and ready to be gathered. But he did command us to pray for *harvesters.* The supreme and crying need is for *harvesters to go out into the field after the harvest,*

[1]Luke 5:4. [2]Matt. 9:38.

for the harvest will never come in out of the field to be gathered.

"He that *goeth forth* [into the *field*] and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, *bringing his sheaves with him.*"[1] He *goes after* the sheaves and *brings* them out of the *field;* they do not come to him.

All this and much more like it forces upon us the conviction that the Lord's "go" means *GO!*

"GO" DOES NOT MEAN "SEND"

Yet in spite of all this evidence, multiplied thousands of earnest Christians apply the "go" in the Great Commission to Foreign Missions, with the possible inclusion of Home Missions and the work of the ministry. It never seems to dawn on them that it is an individual and personal command to themselves. And so because they are not providentially directed to give their whole lives to the ministry or to missions, Home or Foreign, they imagine that the Lord's command is not to be obeyed except by proxy.

And so we have the utterly unscriptural phrase, "Either go or send some one in your place," which has helped multitudes to live in constant disobedience to the Great Commission and still be in good conscience about it.

The Lord never commanded us to either go or send some one else in our place. He commanded us to *GO!*

And every Christian has a personal world into

[1] Psa. 126:6.

which he is to go. It is our business to do the going. It is the Lord's prerogative to do the sending. "Whom shall *I send,* and who will go for *us?*"[1] he inquires. No one can send another in his place. He can do nothing but *go* without living in disobedience.

Right here is the reason why genuine heart interest in missions is so hard to arouse. Proxy witnessing in the place of personal witnessing will make practical interest in missions almost impossible. The one who is not going with the message of salvation into his own personal world will have but a sentimental interest in those who are going with the message into their own personal worlds.

But once let a Christian become obedient and go with the Gospel into his own world, and he will be on fire with enthusiasm to co-operate, financially and in every other way, with those who need help to go into their personal worlds. Imagine a church full of soul-winners; do you think the active missionary interest would be confined to a small handful of women, and do you think it would be difficult to keep up the interest even among them? *A non-missionary church full of soul-winners is an impossibility!*

WE MUST TAKE CHRIST TO THE WORLD

There is another utterly unscriptural phrase that has grown up out of this misconception of our Lord's command. The great majority of Chris-

[1]Isaiah 6:8.

tians are trying to "bring the world to Christ." But that is not what the Lord commanded. He told us to do the very opposite. He told us to *take Christ to the world*. "Ye shall be witnesses unto *me*,"[1] he said, and then he told us to *take* our testimony to him to every creature in all the world. We cannot bring the world to Christ. It will not come. The natural heart is enmity against God, and men in its power will refuse to come. But we can take Christ to the world and bear our testimony to him in such compelling power and persuasiveness as to overcome enmity and melt hearts into penitence and saving faith.

Yes, this ancient Program can be put into successful operation in the twentieth century. The children of this world are reaching the people with their propositions, and the children of light can do the same thing. Merchants have no trouble in getting to the people. Milk dealers reach every customer daily. Salesmen of all sorts find a way of getting to us with their goods, while politicians regularly organize so as to reach and influence if possible every last voter in a given territory. Every one is being reached and everything is being *brought* to the modern man—everything but the Gospel. And the Church can take the Gospel to every man, *if Christ did not command an impossibility!*

There is therefore but one thing for a Christian to do who wants to be obedient to his Lord, and that is to *GO*.

[1] Acts 1:8.

II. We Must Go Systematically

A hit-or-miss method is sure to defeat us. There is certain to be confusion without a definite program to work to. Any business man would regard it as the worst of follies to try to run a business without method.

But we need not make our own program, for the Lord has made one for us. He has not only told us to *go,* but he has told us *how* to go.

SYSTEMATIZING THE FIELD

We are first to be systematic in the division of our field.

When the Lord systematically divided the world-field into four districts and commanded the disciples to bear the message simultaneously to Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and "the uttermost part of the earth,"[1] he gave us a definite Program by which every lesser field, down to the smallest, is to be systematized for the work of witnessing. We are authorized, not to say commanded, to divide the field in which we are located, and into which we are to go with our testimony, into such districts as will enable us systematically to cover the whole field with our message.

This is precisely what business men do. When a wholesale business is organized, they first determine on a location most favorably situated with reference to the territory they propose to cover.

[1]Acts 1:8.

They next build a distributing center, having in mind practical usefulness in their business rather than ornamental beauty. Then they employ salesmen—personal workers—and assign them to specific sections of that territory. And then they send them out in systematic fashion to dispose of their goods in those various sections, giving them every possible assistance in their work.

Business men are keen enough to see that this is the only method by which any given territory can be covered. The Lord's people ought also to see that this is the only program by which the message can be carried to all the lost in their field.

SYSTEMATIZING THE LABOR

We are also to be systematic in the division of our labor. Just what this division should be has already been made perfectly clear to us in what the Holy Spirit did on the Day of Pentecost. He directed and empowered *all* the disciples in the work of private and informal witnessing, and then he selected and empowered *one* of the number to preach a sermon that became the climax of the previous witnessing.

Public preaching, therefore, at least that which is directed toward the salvation of the lost, is evidently intended by the Holy Spirit to be the climax and culmination of the private witnessing that is to accompany it. Not that no climax is possible except in connection with public preaching. Far from it. But that public preaching, especially that which is

to the lost, is not likely to bring a climax of decision unless it is accompanied by private witnessing, prayer, and personal work. Many a decision for Christ is brought about by private testimony, but a sermon is not likely to bring decision unless it is accompanied by the private work of individual Christians.

This is where many a pastor fails. Christian people will go out of a service saying they cannot possibly understand how it is that the lost do not yield under such preaching as their pastor does. But the reason is very simple. A sermon to the lost is to be the climax of something that has preceded, and if that something has not preceded there is not likely to be any climax, no matter how earnest the appeal of the preacher. *The pastor has failed simply because the people have failed behind him.* If we do not systematize our witnessing and carry out the Program the Holy Spirit has laid down for us we must expect defeat and failure in our work.

This Program is very simple, perfectly definite, thoroughly practical, and easily operated, and when it is actually followed, *it always gets results.* It is just as easily followed in the twentieth century as is was in the first, and the Church would be just as victorious to-day as the early Church was if she would follow this divine Program.

A remarkable illustration as well as proof of this occurred more than a generation ago, in Valparaiso, Indiana, when it was a small city of about 4,000,

including the country population adjacent.[1] There were in that population less than seven hundred church-members, and at least 1,500 old enough to be Christians who never went inside a church door.

The Rev. M. T. Lamb, the Baptist pastor, with his little church of a hundred members, began meetings, meantime making desperate efforts to get some one to come and do the preaching, but failing everywhere.

The pastor did the preaching, therefore, and the meetings continued three weeks without the slightest interest among the unsaved. Of the 1,500 or more of them in the city, not one was coming.

Finally they were able to secure a young stonemason from Chicago, whose uncouth appearance and foreign accent were much against him, but who was a consecrated personal worker.

Taking one of the deacons with him, he started out calling at every house, insisting on seeing every one, servants and all, and in each home gave a tender, earnest exhortation, had prayer where desirable, and left with an invitation to the meetings.

Within three or four days others began doing the same work, and before the meetings closed a large number, including many of the converts, were doing this house-to-house work.

The results were immediate. On the first night after the house-to-house personal work began, there were several new faces in the Baptist meetings, within a week the house was full and nearly a

[1] Story condensed from "Won by One," M. T. Lamb, pub. by F. M. Barton, Cleveland, O.

dozen had requested prayer, and within a short time the Methodists, who were also in meetings, had a house full, and the Presbyterians were compelled to start meetings, and they soon had a house full.

Before the meetings closed, every unsaved soul in Valparaiso had had the Gospel most earnestly presented to him at least two or three times, resulting in hundreds of them receiving Christ.

Now note just what they had done. They had systematized both the field and the labor, and had followed the divine Program according to instructions. They had turned the field into one big district and had gone systematically to every house in the city and carried the Gospel to the lost. They had witnessed in a private, informal way in every home, and the Gospel had been preached in a public, formal way every night in three churches. And that program had worked! The Lord's Programs always work! When he makes a Program, he makes the kind that *will* work!

But the Church is not following this Program to-day. There is a reason. We will seek to find it.

CHAPTER III

SATANIC OPPOSITION

THE divine Program worked too well to suit Satan. It worked so well at the beginning of the Age that it took him well nigh two hundred years to work any hindrance to it. It worked so well that if he had not fought it with a substitute program, he could have retained at most but a small following among earth's millions. So delay it he must, and delay it he finally did. We shall seek to find out how.

I. How Satan Hindered the Divine Program

The one thing, aside from the divine power, that made the program such a sweeping success was that *every disciple was a witness;* they were *all* propagandists. It was right here that Satan struck his blow.

The first thing he did was so to over-emphasize the distinctions in the divinely appointed division of service as finally to get an entirely equal witnessing brotherhood divided into two companies, with the great majority in one, and the small minority in the other. The small company came to be called "clergy," and the large company "laity." And then he worked the witnessing out of the hands of the "laity," until it was finally regarded

as the exclusive right of the "clergy." Then came the Devil's Millennium which history calls the Dark Ages!

THE BLOW THAT STUNNED THE CHURCH

This was the most terrific blow Satan ever dealt the Church, and one from which she has never recovered. It stunned the Church and all but killed her, and although the Reformation gave some promise of returning health and vigor, yet the recovery of her normal functions was only partial, and she is to-day slowly but surely losing out to the powers of darkness.

The fact is that there are multitudes in the Church to-day who are still living in the Dark Ages, at least so far as obedience to the Great Commission is concerned. Some of the most earnest of those who may read these pages will reach this point with a feeling of amazement and perplexity. They have always supposed that carrying the Gospel to the unsaved is precisely what the pastor is for. Of course it is cause for rejoicing if the church has a few officials and perhaps some others who are "gifted in that direction" and "interested in that kind of work," who will supplement the pastor's personal work, but that *every* Christian is commanded to *take* the Gospel to *all* the unsaved who will not come to church after it never seems to have entered their minds. And when such a thing is suggested they are ready to ask, Why did the pastor enter the ministry if it

was not to give his life to soul-winning? Why all those years of preparation if it was not to become expert in preaching and personal work for the reaching of the lost? Why does the church "employ" him and "pay him a salary," if he is not to give his whole life to proclaiming the Gospel, in public and from house to house, and winning souls to Christ and bringing them into the Church, while the members support and encourage him in his work?

A PROGRAM THAT INSURES FAILURE

If these questions are in your mind, stop and think a minute. No wholesale house could ever be run on such a program, and no more can the Church of the living God! Suppose it should be considered the duty of the sales manager, in harmony with that program, to go out and do all the selling, with a little help, perhaps, from a few officers of the company or members of the firm, while the salesmen support him by their encouragement and their faithful attendance on his weekly lectures on the quality and value of their goods. And suppose the salesmen simply go out into the territory through the week to try to persuade a few prospective customers to come to those weekly lectures in the hope that they will decide to buy, while they themselves make little or no attempt to sell any goods, but simply seek to interest possible customers in the fine lectures of the sales manager. How long do you think that house would last?

Just about long enough to exhaust the capital! And the fact that the Church has not gone to the wall for good on such a program is certain proof that it is a divine institution! Indeed, it was precisely that program that all but killed the Church during the Dark Ages.

THE PASTOR NOT A HIRED MAN

Think again a minute. The pastor is not "employed" by a church, for he is not the church's "hired man." He is "employed" by God, the Owner of the business, and taken care of out of his own treasury, the funds in which are administered by the church. No pastor is ever "paid a salary" out of the pockets of the people while he does their witnessing and soul-winning work for them; he is given a "support" out of the treasury of the Lord, while he gives his whole time to the perfecting of the members in the art of witnessing and soul-winning.

At a Monday morning ministers' meeting, the writer heard a prominent pastor tell the incident that he once called on a church officer to lead in prayer at a prayer-meeting, and the man retorted, "Pray yourself! What do we hire you for?" And you who read these lines may be saying to your pastor, in attitude if not in words, "Win the lost to Christ yourself! What do we hire you for?"

When men are struggling and going down in the waves of sin, the pastor is not the whole life-saving crew! There was a terrible wreck off the coast

of Italy. The captain of the life-saving crew, instead of manning the life-boat, stood on shore and shouted instructions through a trumpet to the drowning sailors. The report that went to the government said, "We rendered what assistance we could through the speaking trumpet, but the next morning there were twenty bodies washed ashore." And the church that uses its pastor as its speaking trumpet, and fails to man the life-boats with the entire crew and push out to save the lost who are going down, will be responsible for a great company who will one day be thrown up on the shores of a Christless eternity who might have been saved if the Lord's people had gone after them.

SATAN BEHIND OUR FAILURE

Satan is behind this misconception of the Great Commission. Multitudes of most earnest Christians never dream that they have been put into the list of disobedient disciples by accepting one of Satan's sophistries, but it is true. He has always used every possible means to close the mouths of Christian witnesses, for he is overcome "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their *testimony*."[1] And so he is only too glad to see us busy in all sorts of "church work," so long as he can get us to stop short of soul-winning work. He will be willing to see us take an active interest even in Home and Foreign Missions, and even occupy offi-

[1]Rev. 12:11.

cial positions in that work, provided he can keep us too busy to do any soul-winning work ourselves.

A Missionary Secretary wrote a confession to the Missionary Review of the World. She said: "I was helping to get up a big convention, and was full of enthusiasm over making the session a success. On the opening day my aged father, who came as a delegate to the convention, sat with me at luncheon at the hotel. He listened sympathetically to my glowing accounts of the great features that were to be. When I paused for breath, he leaned towards me and said, while his eye followed the stately movements of the head waiter, 'Daughter, I think that big head waiter over there is going to accept Jesus Christ. I've been talking to him about his soul.' I almost gasped. I had been too busy planning for a great missionary convention. I had no time to think of the soul of the head waiter.

"When we went out to my apartment, a Negro man was washing the apartment windows. Jim was honest and trustworthy, and had been a most satisfactory helper in my home. Only a few moments passed before I heard my father talking earnestly with Jim about his personal salvation, and a swift accusation went to my heart as I realized that I had known Jim for years and had never said a word to him of salvation.

"A carpenter came in to repair a door. I awaited his going with impatience to sign his work ticket, for my ardent soul longed to be back at my mis-

sionary task. Even as I waited I heard my father talking with the man about the door he had just fixed, and then simply and naturally leading the conversation to the only door into the Kingdom of God.

"A Jew lives across the street. I had thought that possibly I would call on the folks who lived in the neighborhood—some time—but I had my hands so full of my missionary work the calls had never been made, but, as they met on the street, my father talked with my neighbor of the only Saviour of the world.

"A friend took us out to ride. I waited for my father to get into the car, but in a moment he was up beside the chauffeur, and in a few minutes I heard him talking earnestly with the man about the way of salvation. When we reached home he said, 'You know I was afraid I might never have another chance to speak to the man.'

"The wife of a prominent railway man took him out to ride in her elegant limousine. 'I am glad she asked me to go,' he said, 'for it gave me an opportunity of talking with her about her salvation. I think no one had ever talked with her before.'

"Yet these opportunities had come to me also and had passed by as ships in the night, while I strained my eyes to catch sight of a larger sail on a more distant horizon. I could but question my own heart whether my passion was for souls or success in getting up conventions."

Here is the vital difference between sentimental

and practical interest in missions. No matter how much enthusiasm we show in talking and planning missionary work, if we haven't enough interest in the African, or the Jap, or the Italian who does our work to make the first attempt to lead him to a saving faith in Christ, our interest in missions is nothing but sentiment, and it scarcely touches the fringes of Satan's soul-destroying work.

Just so long, therefore, as the conception prevails that the pastor is to do the active soul-winning work of the church, and just so long as the most earnest members of the church stop short of actual and definite personal efforts to bring Christ to lost men and women, just so long will the great enemy of Christ and his Church prevail. It is high time the Church stopped working by Satan's program!

II. How Satan Keeps the Divine Program Hindered

Satan keeps the divine Program hindered by keeping his own program in operation. Through its means he has the Church by the throat, and is strangling the life out of her by shutting off the breath of her universal testimony. He is doing this in unnumbered ways, for he fears universal testimony to the saving grace of God more than any other one thing. Anything to keep Christians still, is the one main track on which all his opposition to the Church is run.

ENTANGLED IN WORLDLINESS

He entangles Christians in the plans and pleasures of the worldly and godless crowd, and thus shuts off their personal testimony and kills the public testimony of the preacher. For the lost hear the preacher say that when we are saved all the old things will pass away and all things will become new; and then they look at the worldly church-member and see all the old things and nothing new in his life, and conclude that what the preacher has said is a beautiful theory that doesn't work, and go right on in their service of Satan.

THE "CHURCH" WILL DO IT

Then Satan fosters the impression that upon a certain organic body of people called "the church" rests the responsibility of soul-winning, and that if each member does his share of "church work," Christ will somehow be brought to the lost by "the church." But the truth is, the ministry of taking the Gospel to every creature was never committed to the Church, much less to the "clergy." It was committed to the individuals composing the Church. Witnessing to Christ is a *personal* not an *organic* ministry.

MISCONCEPTION OF THE MINISTRY

Another device of Satan is to give the pastors themselves the conception that the pastorate is a religious lectureship rather than a soul-winning gen-

eralship. And so it comes to pass that instead of doing the work of an overseer or superintendent, and actually leading and instructing the members in the work of soul-winning, they try to get the results they are after by their pulpit work.

This is why many pastors fail to experience anything like adequate results in their work. They fail because the church is failing behind them; and the church is failing because the pastor, in turn, has not led them out in that work which alone will make his work succeed. And perhaps behind the pastor is a Theological Seminary that has failed to instruct him in his main responsibility to the flock of God. And Satan's skilful manipulation is behind all these failures. For wherever you see a church diverted from the one work of soul-winning, you may be sure Satan has had his hand in things somewhere.

HOW "CHURCH WORK" HINDERS

Again, Satan works into church life and activity a multitude of things that need badly enough to be done, but which it is not the business of the Church to do, and thus steals away both time and service from the most earnest and consecrated of the members, who are the very ones who would be the first to take the Gospel to the lost if they were not entangled in these multiplied forms of "church work." So many societies and organizations, with objects that are worthy, but that do not belong in the work of the Church as such, are besieging the

Church for recognition and co-operation to-day that the average church would have no time left for her own work if any attention were to be given to these multiplied calls.

WITNESSING THAT FAILS

Another successful method of Satan's is to give those earnest Christians who are anxious to witness something else to witness to beside Christ. Many churches have a little company of faithful people who are constantly witnessing to the splendid sermons or the fine personality of their pastor, the crowds that attend the services, the fine singing, the splendid sociability, and a lot of other delightful things connected with their church, but they are not going everywhere *witnessing to Christ.* Some of them are very intelligent about the history and doctrines of their denomination, and can entertain you by the hour with most informing discourse upon them, but when it comes to such testimony to Christ and his redeeming power as will bring a sinning soul to a saving knowledge of him, they are doing none of that kind of witnessing. And so their churches are dragging through weary months with scarcely a soul brought to receive Christ, while a great harvest is going to eternal ruin all around them for the want of harvesters. The only kind of witnessing for which the Holy Spirit will ever empower a Christian is witnessing to Christ. Witnessing of every other kind is powerless to save. Satan knows this, and this is why he

influences earnest Christians who want to witness into testimony to everything and everybody except Christ and his saving grace, and closes their mouths about him.

THE "GO-TO-CHURCH" METHOD

Among the most successful weapons which Satan uses against the Church is the all but universal notion that it is the responsibility of the lost to go after the Gospel. And so almost the entire evangelistic effort of Christians everywhere exhausts itself in trying to get the lost to *go to church.* Our "Go-to-church" campaigns are based upon this very notion, and practically every evangelistic campaign is an attempt to induce the lost to "go-to-church" to hear the great singing and the imported preacher, in the hope that they may possibly accept Christ under the impulse of the service.

The result is inevitable. In the average revival campaign held in a single church, the fifty or hundred unsaved Sunday-school scholars, and the twenty-five or fifty unsaved relatives and friends of the members are reached, with possibly a few strangers, while the great throngs of unsaved are left utterly untouched to drift into a Christless eternity, where they will forever wail out the awful accusation, "No man cared enough for my soul to bring me the Good News of salvation." And in even the greatest and most successful tabernacle campaigns, only a pitifully small fraction of the unsaved are ever reached, while the churches slip

back into their criminal neglect of the lost almost as soon as the meetings close, hoping that a few unsaved will come after the Gospel and accept it while they wait for the next go-to-church evangelistic campaign to come.

A Socialist said at a meeting of his followers, "The present policy of the Church is this: 'You may come here and get God's message and go to heaven, or you may stay away and go to hell!'" Is this the truth, or is it a libel?

In an Ohio city of 135,000, in which there were more than 50,000 old enough to be saved who were without Christ, a six weeks' tabernacle meeting, led by one of the most capable and widely sought pastor-evangelists in the land and co-operated in most heartily by more than fifty churches, resulted in reaching about 1,200. This was cause for great rejoicing, but what did the churches do for the 49,000 others who were still out of Christ? Just what churches everywhere do—*nothing!* They had spared neither labor nor expense to give the lost of their city the chance of their lives to come after the Gospel and be saved. What more could they do? They had done their utmost to get the sheaves to come in out of the field and be harvested; to get the fish to come to shore and be caught; to get the dead to come after life; and if 49,000 of them still insisted on staying away, weren't the churches helpless to do any more? What more should they have done?

If this is the attitude of the great majority of

our churches to-day—and it is, then the Socialist was right. The present policy of depending on the pastor for almost the entire soul-winning work of the church must inevitably make just the impression on people that was expressed by the Socialist.

The pastor can never do this work. There aren't enough of him. It is an absolute physical impossibility. Bishop Thoburn has said: "If Christ had started on the day of his baptism to preach in the villages of India and had continued up to the present, visiting one village each day, healing the sick and proclaiming the Gospel, he would still have left unvisited 3,000 villages in India." This illustrates in some measure the inability of the pastor to get the Gospel to all the lost, especially in a crowded city field, before they are forever beyond his reach.

The pastor cannot average more than ten hours a week in house-to-house work. Now suppose a hundred members of his church should average one hour a week in this work. This would mean that they were together giving as much time to that work in one week as he could give in ten, to say nothing of the added emphasis that would be given to a testimony coming from "laymen."

This policy of the Church is one reason why the pastor fails. And it is why the evangelist fails. And it is why the Church herself is going increasingly to fail until she gets back to first century obedience to the Great Commission.

Many have been praying for years for a great,

world-wide revival. When the Church gets back to literal obedience to the Great Commission the answer will come! The harvest is dead-ripe and ready to be harvested, while the harvesters are sitting in the storehouse and wondering why it doesn't come in! The harvest can be gathered as soon as the harvesters go into the *field* after it!

HOW SATAN USES CHRIST'S PROGRAM

Satan knows the value of the Lord's Program for his people, and so while he is doing his infernal best to keep us from working to it, he is most diligently using it in his own destructive work.

Every adherent of a false faith is a *propagandist,* especially in those cults that are spreading most rapidly.

When D. L. Moody was within forty miles of Salt Lake City on his way there to hold meetings, the engineer came back into the train and gave him an invitation to ride in the engine. The invitation was accepted, and that engineer tried through the entire forty-mile ride to convert D. L. Moody to Mormonism!

The one thing that accounts for the spread of Christian Science in spite of all the opposition to it is that every Eddyite is a personal worker and a propagandist.

And look at Mohammedanism. Dan Crawford says that the one reason it has captured one-eighth of the world's population is because of its "all-at-it" program. "From Morocco to Zanzibar," he

says, "from Sierra Leone to Siberia and China, from Bosnia to New Guinea has witnessed the success of the all-at-it method."

THE AWFUL RESULTS

Perhaps the most tragic and heart-breaking feature of the failure of Christians to take the Gospel to the lost is the occasional inside glimpse of the awful results.

A pastor was passing a big department store, and followed a sudden impulse to go in and talk to the proprietor on the subject of his salvation. Finding him, he said: "Mr. T., I've talked beds and carpets and bookcases with you, but I've never talked *my* business with you. Would you give me a few minutes to do so?" Being led to the private office, the minister took out his New Testament and showed him passage after passage which brought before that business man his duty to accept Jesus Christ. Finally the tears began to roll down his cheeks, and he said to the pastor, "I'm seventy years of age. I was born in this city, and more than a hundred ministers, and more than five hundred church officers, have known me as you have, to do business with, but in all those years you are the only man who ever spoke to me about my soul."

A trustee in an important church in Pennsylvania told the writer that he attended all the services of that church for twenty years, the people knowing all the time that he was not a Christian, and no one in all that time, *not even the pastor,* ever said one

word to him about receiving Christ. Finally becoming alarmed for fear no one would ever approach him on the subject, he hunted up some one himself who could tell him how to accept Christ.

When Wu Ting Fang was Chinese Ambassador to this country, he spoke in many places throughout the land, and always praised Confucianism as being far above Christianity. After closing his ambassadorship, he spent his last Sunday in this country in New York City. The Rev. Huie Kin, a Christian Chinese pastor in the city, telephoned Mr. Wu at his hotel and asked him to attend church service. Mr. Wu said to the pastor: "When I was a boy in China I was acquainted with some Christian people and thought highly of Christianity. I had never identified myself with it, but when I was appointed to America, I decided that I wanted to throw in my lot with Christian people there, and made up my mind that I would accept the first invitation which was given me to attend a Christian service." Then after a moment's pause, he said: "This is the first invitation I have had!"

It has been stated that Leon Trotzky was within easy reach of, if not in frequent contact with, many Christians in New York in his youth and young manhood, but that no one ever attempted to win him for Christ. And look at the result!

A certain farmer walked to church every Sunday past a neglected home. In that home was a boy whom he never even asked to attend Sunday-

school. That boy was Joe Smith, the leader of the Mormon church.

"If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; *but his blood shall I require at thine hand.*"[1]

[1]Ezek. 33:8.

PART II

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

INTRODUCTORY

WHEN the Lord gave his people the Program of work we have been considering he thereby eliminated all other programs whatsoever.

In choosing just this method of work rather than some other he must have had some definite purpose in view.

What his entire purpose was we shall never know here, but some of the reasons for giving us that method of work lie right on the surface, and by as much as we are able to recognize them, therefore, by that much shall we be in fellowship with his purpose.

There are at least two things that lie in his purpose about which there can be no question. One is that this Program is the only method of work that will save the Church. The other is that it is the only method that will reach the lost. For these reasons at least, then, he gave us the Program he did.

We will therefore consider in this portion of our study of the Great Commission these two elements that lie in the divine Purpose.

CHAPTER I

THIS PROGRAM WILL SAVE THE CHURCH

A CHRISTIAN is one who has become spiritually alive from the dead. The presence of spiritual life within him is the one fundamental thing that distinguishes him from the unregenerate world about him.

WHAT SPIRITUAL LIFE IS

This spiritual life is not native to us, nor can it be *developed* out of anything we have or are by nature. It must be *given* to us. So God has given us eternal life, "and this life is in His Son," through whose possession of us when we believed on him we were born from above; "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;"[1] by which we have become a "new creation"[2] in Christ, being thereby made "partakers of the divine nature."[3]

The life of a Christian, therefore, is the life of Christ within us through the Holy Spirit. It is not a life similar to his, it is *his life*. This is shown by the fact that what we receive in the new birth is not only "everlasting life," but also "eternal life," which is far more than "everlasting life." For while everlasting life has no end, yet it may have

[1]John 1:13. [2]2 Cor. 5:17 (Gr.). [3]2 Peter 1:4.

a beginning; but eternal life has neither beginning nor end.

Now the Triune God is the only one in the universe who has eternal life. The only way he can give us eternal life, therefore, is to possess us with his own life, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit. This is one thing Paul meant when he said, "To me to live *is Christ*."[1] This is a mystery that is too high for us. We can none of us understand it; but we can believe it.

LIFE MUST EXPRESS ITSELF

Now life, of whatever kind, must manifest itself. Wherever life is present and in normal condition, it must act.

Moreover, all life of every kind must express itself according to its nature, it must act in conformity with its own type. Physical life will express itself physically, mental life, mentally, and spiritual life, spiritually. And spiritual means far more than moral. A man may be splendidly moral without any relation to spiritual things whatever. All spiritual activity has to do with direct and vital connection with God, his Word, his Son, his people, his work for a lost world.

Wherever the life of God is present and unhindered, therefore, it must and will act in perfect harmony with his nature. If this is not certain, nothing can be.

The conclusion is that if the life of Christ is in

[1]Phil. 1:21.

a man it *must express* itself, for it will be in him "a well of water *springing up"; bubbling over.* So long as conditions are normal it cannot be kept down.

And also, this upspringing and bubbling-over life of Christ in a man will make him prefer to think, say, and do those things that are perfectly normal to the life of Christ himself.

If we can find out, therefore, what things are normal to the life of Christ, we shall also have learned what the normal Christian life is.

LIFE IS EXPRESSED IN LOVE

"God is love."[1] Love lies at the heart of God's nature, and is the normal expression of every outgoing of his being toward others. And so love *will* and *must* be the normal expression of the life of Christ in the believer, or in other words, of the Christian Life.

Then if we can find out what his love prompts him to do in himself, we shall know what his love will seek to do through us when his life possesses us. Think carefully for a moment.

Love is the spontaneous outgoing of the whole life and being on behalf of *others.* It is the very nature of love to *give.* It is *self*-giving. "God so *loved* the world that He *gave*"[2] *himself* in his Son, who was "God manifest in the flesh."[3]

This accounts not only for the *fact* that Christ came into the world, but shows *why* he came. He

[1] 1 John 4:8. [2] John 3:16. [3] 1 Tim. 3:16.

came to *give himself;* and he gave himself as a ransom, that whosoever accepted his gift "should not perish, but have eternal life."[1] "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,"[2] and in doing so he gave up, and laid down, and let go, until there was nothing left to let go of but his life, and then he gave that up that those dead in trespasses and sins might live through him. This is what love prompted him to do.

Then he said to his disciples, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."[3] And so as he was sent to give up his life, we are sent to do the same thing, though not in the same way. He gave his life up in death; we are to give ours up in service. His was a dying sacrifice; ours is to be "a living sacrifice." So he tells us to make everything else secondary and contributory and "go ye into all the world, and proclaim the Good News to every creature."[4]

LOVE IS EXPRESSED IN SOUL-WINNING

If a man is really a Christian, therefore, the indwelling life and constraining love of Christ will *impel* him to go out into all his portion of the world and seek the lost for Christ, and this will be the normal activity and the main business of his life. For what the love of God was and did through Christ when he was among men, it will also be and do through Christians while they are among men. The life of God *must act,* if it is in us, and it must act according to *its nature.* And so true Christians

[1]John 3:15. [2]Luke 19:10. [3]John 20:21. [4]Mark 16:15.

who are in normal spiritual health will *give their lives* in seeking the lost, using whatever secular pursuits they are in to pay expenses, while the main line business of their lives will be the same as it was with Christ.

The conclusion of all this is inevitable. *Christ's Program of every-member evangelism is the only thing that will save the Church.* The reason is that constant soul-winning activity on the part of every Christian is the life of Christ in us *normally expressed,* and will therefore keep the Church in vigorous health; while ceasing the work of soul-winning means the life of Christ *abnormally suppressed* in all who do not engage in it, and by that much heads the Church toward certain death. Normal exercise of the life that is in us means vigor, and strength, and abounding vitality; while suppression of normal activity and lack of exercise, means increasing ill health, and heads us in the direction of death.

Now there are two features of the present condition of the Church that need most serious attention. One is the present increasing decline which is becoming an alarming drift toward death, and the other is the imperative call for revival and the renewal of vigorous health.

I. The Present Decline

The present condition of the Church, both in numerical and spiritual strength, is cause for serious apprehension, to say the least.

There is an increasingly small fraction of professed Christians who ever make any personal effort whatever to win a lost soul to Christ, and comparatively few even of the most earnest of them ever do much of that work except during the short period of the year when evangelistic meetings are on. And even then the efforts of most of them are put forth largely to get the lost to church, with little or no direct effort to get them to receive Christ. Ask even some of the most active to sit down by an inquirer, open up the way of salvation, and lead him into an assurance of acceptance through faith, and they are practically *helpless*. And as for soul-winners who are always at it wherever they are,—well, the most of us never met a person of that kind.

At the Northern Baptist Convention in Atlantic City in 1918, Dr. Emory W. Hunt, in speaking of how the Church is neglecting its real task, said: "It does sadly neglect the very class to seek which its Master sent it: the unchurched masses. I am quite aware that such a broad statement will at once challenge an indignant reply from the church which is innocently unconscious in this neglect. To be sure, the preacher is constantly voicing the wide invitation that 'whosoever will may come,' and occasionally hints that every one needs to come. Just about enough individuals out of the great mass of humanity are responding to its feeble invitation to quiet the conscience of the Church, to recruit its wasted numbers, and to continue its existence. But the Church has not even faced the question why its

appeal is not more persuasive. It is not unfair to say that the average church is content to maintain services and to save its own life. With such a message as the Church has to give, and with so pitiful a need of it as this weary world feels, the best thought and purpose of the Church ought to be given to the question of how to bring these two together, and of what the misjudgments are which keep them apart."

Ah, yes! "Such a message"; "so pitiful a need"; "how to bring these two together." There is only one way, and that is to give the Lordship of Christ practical acknowledgment by a literal obedience to the Great Commission.

But we are increasingly disobedient to that command, and the result is, *the Church is dying.*

1. Look at the Numerical Decline

Figures may mean much or little, of course, but here are a few that at least indicate that the direction of the present movement in the Church is toward death.

Up to the beginning of this century the Church in America was gaining faster than the population. In 1800, there were ten church-members out of every 145 inhabitants. In 1900, it was ten out of every 45. But the increase steadily slowed up toward the end of the century, until from 1900 to 1910 the gain in the Church, according to Dr. Josiah Strong, barely kept pace with the percentage of gain in the population, while from 1910 to 1914 the

slowing-up process continued and indeed became more serious.[1] And during the war the Church lost out at such an alarmingly increasing rate that the figures of Dr. H. K. Carroll, published in 1920 for the previous year, give the Methodists, North and South, a net loss of 86,000, the Presbyterians 41,000, the Disciples 17,000, and the Northern Baptists 9,000, with only the Southern Baptists showing a net gain, which was 32,000. The fact is, therefore, that the war seems simply to have accelerated what was already going on throughout Christendom. Rather large gains are reported for the past two years, but the figures are not nearly as encouraging as they appear to be, when the gain in population and other factors are taken into consideration.

The situation in the Sunday-school is equally alarming. According to the Interchurch World Movement Survey, the Protestant Sunday-school enrollment in the United States in 1916 was 21,800,000. In 1920 it had shrunk to 15,600,000, over 6,000,000 in four years! At that time—in 1920—there were over 27,000,000 children and young people under twenty-five who were nominally Protestant who were not enrolled in any Sunday-school.

From other parts of Christendom, also, comes the same alarming story. In a period of six years pre-

1 "The average annual increase of population from 1900 to 1910 was 2.1 percent. The annual increase of the evangelical church membership was sometimes above and sometimes below that figure. Including everything which calls itself religious, the increase of church membership in the year 1910 was 1.81 percent; in 1911 it was 1.68 percent; in 1912 it was 1.6 percent; in 1913 it was 1.79 percent; and in 1914 it was 2.05 percent." ("The New World-Religion," by Josiah Strong, D.D., Doubleday, Page & Co.)

ceding the war, the Church of England in Great Britain lost far in excess of 300,000 from their Sunday-schools, and in nine years the Non-Conformists lost 400,000.

Across a period of twelve years at about the same time the Baptist Churches in Great Britain had a net loss of 24,000 from their membership, and 85,000 from their Sunday-schools, the decline being steady from year to year.

One of the most serious features in the numerical decline is the increasing lapsing of church membership.

One of the larger denominations—the Presbyterian,—lost throughout the world in three years just before the war over 260,000 by lapse of membership, and that denomination is steadily losing 50,000 a year from that cause.

In a dozen states of which Chicago is the commercial center, 40,000 were received into the Baptist churches in a year just preceding the war, while in the same year the names of 14,000 were erased.

During 1919, the Baptist churches of the North erased three names from their rolls for every five received.

In nearly 600 English Baptist churches during a period of pre-war years, out of every 1,000 coming into the churches, 666 were lost by other causes than death.

The Rev. Gwilym O. Griffith, writing of the English Baptist decline, puts his finger on the cause when he says, "The great days of the Free churches have

not been the days when they have devised ingenious allurements to bribe the masses into half-empty sanctuaries, but when they have gone out to the fields and market places and village greens and *taken the Gospel to the people.*" (Emphasis the author's.)

Right here we have the real cause of the alarming situation. We are increasingly disobedient to the Great Commission, and the results we are reaping are the inevitable fruitage of our disobedience.

But suppose the tide turns, the decline in additions to the churches is arrested, and the Church appears to be regaining her former rate of growth, is that in itself an indication of returning spiritual vigor?

That depends altogether on the basis on which the results are obtained. If the efforts at increasing the membership of the churches succeed only in adding a larger proportion of unsaved to the already "mixed multitude," if the present drift from the faith and the increasingly loose and worldly methods of getting members are to keep pace with the growing church rolls, the Church, instead of regaining lost ground, will rather be taking to herself that which will only the more certainly insure her final decay and disintegration.

As this book goes out there would seem to be some slight indications of an apparent turn in the tide of decline, but the apostasy from the faith is not being arrested, nor are the conditions admitting to membership being raised, but rather lowered, if anything, and what promise can our drives for in-

creased membership hold under such conditions? Nothing but the promise of further worldliness and apostasy.

2. Look at the Spiritual Decline

One evidence of the decline is seen in the growing tendency to substitute worldly methods and machinery in Church life for the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. The impression increasingly prevails that the Church is simply an institution whose prosperity can be assured by applying the same methods used by the world. We are even going to the length of deliberately seeking the friendship and co-operation of men who know nothing by experience of the grace of God and spiritual things, and who are therefore living in enmity against God. We are utterly forgetting that if the Church is faithful she will testify against the world that its works are evil, and that in return she will receive—not its friendship and co-operation, but its enmity and antagonism. We seem altogether to have lost sight of the fact that we can hardly hope to win men out of the world into salvation in Christ without pointing out the irreconcilable difference between the Church and the world so clearly as to show them what they are to be saved out of as well as into. The fact is, great sections of the Church do not see this difference, and this is why they are so ready to adopt the carnal methods, measures and means of the world for doing the spiritual work of God.

Dr. James A. Maxwell, writing on "A Partial

Eclipse of the Church," says, "In nature, aim and method, the Church has no parallel or competitor in the world. It stands alone. It is distinct from everything else. In what it is, in what it does, in how it does it, there is no institution like the Church, or a church. It imitates nothing, it is dependent on nothing of the world. It is in the world but no part of it. There is no point [notice this] where the Church and the world touch or fraternize. Between no two things is there greater unlikeness. They are eternally and infinitely distinct and separate. . . . Because business enterprises call for certain measures in order to succeed, because political prosperity yields to certain methods, because the war was won by certain movements, the Church should not be led to depart from the methods peculiar to its nature and mission."

These are strange words in the light of some things seen in the Church, and the principles set forth in them are in condemning contrast with many of the methods and measures already at work in many quarters. The fact is, the adoption of worldly plans is one of the things that is killing the Church. To adopt a program that succeeds in the world, but that God never gave to his Church, is a *straight pathway to failure. Only God's Program will succeed.*

The Drift Into Pleasure

The decline in the Church is also uncovered in her drift into worldly pleasure. The fact that a growing proportion of church-members are enam-

ored of the pleasures of the world indicates unmistakably the steady and alarming decline in her spiritual health. The letting down of the bars on worldly amusements, the growing tendency to condone rather than condemn them, and their increasing popularity among church-members, tell all too plainly which way the Church is headed. A generation ago some one said, "I look for the Church and I find it in the world; I look for the world and I find it in the Church." If this was true then, what about conditions now?

It is all right for the Church to be in the world, provided the world is not in the Church. It is not when the ship is launched into the water, but when the water gets into the ship that she sinks. It is when the Church is in the world and at the same time not of it that she can rescue men out of the world, and in just the proportion in which the world gets into the Church, in just that proportion will her work of rescue decline.

This is why the present condition of worldliness in the Church is so well pleasing to Satan. He can use it in his business. For if there is little or no apparent difference between the Church and the world, he can show that there is no need of salvation. There is nothing to be saved from. The externally decent life that church-members live is all there is of salvation. This is the lie that worldly church-members help Satan to propagate. And this is one of the reasons why the Church is in a decline. Her worldliness is closing her mouth and

making her soul-saving testimony in the name and power of Christ impossible. And it is also producing a decline in her testimony against the world, which is one reason why the bars are coming down and the world is coming in like a flood.

THE GROWING APOSTASY

One of the most unmistakable proofs, however, of the present desperate condition of the Church is her steady drift from the fundamentals of the faith. This drift has been going on increasingly for a generation or more, and has now become too apparent and marked to be ignored or explained away.

While the fences between the denominations have been coming down, another has been going up right through the heart of evangelical Protestantism which is dividing them into two camps, in one of which are those who hold with unswerving loyalty to the so-called orthodox faith, and in the other of which are those who hold more or less with the views of the Modernists and Destructive Critics. So apparent has this division become that Unitarians churches are advertising that the Unitarians in other denominations will be welcomed with them. The result is that these two groups are becoming increasingly restive in each other's company, for how "can two walk together, except they be agreed?"[1]

What the outcome of this condition will be it is not within the purpose of the writer even to remark

[1]Amos. 3:3.

upon here. It is the fact itself as indicating the present condition of the Church that we are after.

One thing is sure, however, and that is that the present situation must change very radically for the better soon, or the present decline cannot be stopped. For this is one of the chief contributing causes of the decline. Any loss of conviction concerning the eternal verities throws wide open the door for the entrance of worldly living and worldly methods, and all these things together are killing the Church.

Think of the serious annual lapsing of church-membership. What is the fundamental cause of it? Receiving the unregenerate into church membership! "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world,"[1] said Paul. And if Demas loves this present world enough to forsake the Church, he was probably never born again, for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,"[2] and probably never was in him, or he would not have lapsed into the world.

And what opens the way for the unregenerate to join the church? The present day departure from the fundamental doctrines of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints,"[3] and the resulting lack of vital, saving message to testify to the lost.

[1] 2 Tim. 4:10. [2] John 2:15. [3] Jude 3 (Gr.).

WHAT LIES BACK OF THE DRIFT

Back of all this lies the fact that the life of Christ in the Church is being increasingly suppressed by the failure of his people to go out into their personal worlds in individual work for individuals. Disobedience to the Great Commission is what is working death in the body. The weakness and anemia induced by the persistent inactivity of the members make it impossible for the body to throw off the diseases that are gnawing at her vitals. There is but one thing to do, and that is to return to that willingness to obey that always commands and opens the way for the inflow of those healing currents of the divine life which alone can drive disease out and restore full health and vigor.

It is no wonder that Dr. A. H. Strong, speaking at the Baptist May Anniversaries in 1904, should express concern. He said, "My greatest concern is lest we should cease to be a witnessing Church. Not sermons, but individual voices of private members of the Church are to evangelize the world. When the Romans shortened their swords they lengthened their territories. Wherever we have had this hand-to-hand work our increase has been great. When we cease to believe that men are lost, cease in private to urge them to come to Christ, the glory will depart from us. The church that ceases to be evangelistic will soon cease to be evangelical, and the church that ceases to be evangelical will soon cease to exist."

Then back of all this decline, back of all the weakness and criminal indifference of the Church, lies *prayerlessness.* Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, and we are breathing more and more feebly—the present declining health of the Church indicates how feebly. Those burdens of prayer for the Church, and those agonized yearnings over the lost that our fathers knew—where are they in the Church to-day? If God's people would go to their knees and wait on him as in other days, how quickly would the whole being be opened for the normal inflow of the divine life and the normal outflow of the divine service for the lost! This brings us to the other side of the question.

II. The Need of Revival

The conditions hinted at in the last few pages are proof enough that there is desperate need of revival in the Church. The working of death in the body can never be arrested except by a renewed inflow of life. The revival of spiritual vitality is the only thing that will drive out disease and bring back abounding health and normal service. But the question is, how is this to be brought about?

There is but one way. When Christ said, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the Age,"[1] he based that promise of his active and abiding presence on a condition. He preceded the promise by the command to "Go into all the world and disciple the nations,"[2] and

[1]Matt. 28:20 (Gr.). [2]Matt. 28:19 (Gr.).

then assuming that we would obey, he assured us of his active presence as we went.

WHAT SPIRITUAL HEALTH IS

This active presence of Christ means the constant inflow of his life to be used in the constant outflow of our service. This is what Paul refers to when, in speaking of his own testimony to Christ, and of his yearning to win the lost and perfect the saved, he says, "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to *his* working, which *worketh in me mightily*."[1] While there was an outflow of service in obedience to the Great Commission, there was an inflow of Christ's life enabling Paul for his obedience. Christ could keep his promise because Paul met the condition.

And he will do the same thing with us. When and as long as we consent to do that which is the normal expression of his life in us, we will have the constant inflow of his life. But when we start out on any service to which he has not called us, his life will at once be suppressed within us and we shall be left to our own resources; because if we do not allow his life to act through us according to its nature, it cannot act at all.

Right here is the true cause of spiritual ill-health. When we cease doing what is normal to his life within us, or when we start out to do what he has never called us to do, the outflow of divine service is at an end, and therefore the inflow of the divine

[1]Col. 1:29.

life is suppressed. And suppressed life brings ill-health.

Here is also indicated the pathway to that renewal of spiritual vitality for want of which the Church is dying to-day. Willingness for the divine service will bring immediate response in the inflow of the divine life, which will both drive out disease and produce abounding health. Spiritual health is certain when he who is our life is given constant access to the whole being, and his access to our whole being is certain when we are in the attitude of consent to his will. It is this alone that will open the doors for Christ to possess us in his fulness, and a continuance in this attitude is the only thing that will keep the doors open.

This is why there is such a crying need for revival in the Church to-day. A revival is the only thing that will drive out disease and renew spiritual vigor. A revival is not a series of evangelistic meetings, but it is that opening of the whole being to God which permits the renewed inflow of his reviving life into ours. A series of meetings may bring us to see our need of a fresh yielding to God, and so bring revival, or a revival of the membership of a church may move them to hold a series of meetings to reach the lost; but the revival we need is not extra meetings, but *a renewal of the life of God within us.*

1. *A Revival Will Drive Out Disease*

WORLDLINESS WILL GO OUT

Worldliness is unthinkable in a church that becomes obedient to the Great Commission, and thereby opens the way for the renewal of the divine life within. One of the reasons why worldly things ever find their way into any life is that the life is not being given to God for the lost. For when soul-winning stops, the divine life is thereby suppressed within, and this opens the way for the entrance of any and all those things of the world which the unhindered life of Christ within would otherwise keep out. A Christian who loves worldly things advertises his spiritual ill-health, and a worldly church proclaims to the world that it is living in disobedience to its Lord. And there is no certain cure for this condition except such a complete surrender to soul-winning activity as will open the way for an unhindered inflow of that life which alone can drive the world completely out.

CHURCH STRIFE WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE

Nothing is a more certain proof of a low spiritual vitality than church trouble. There is no place for strife where spiritual life abounds, for at the heart of spirituality is such love as makes strife impossible. When strife comes in, it is certain that love has gone out. The only certain cure for church trouble is love, and love takes control the moment a church surrenders to the work of soul-

winning and starts out after the lost. Trouble-making and soul-saving can never abide together either in the same heart or the same church.

DOCTRINAL DRIFT WILL DISAPPEAR

Doctrinal troubles and questions about the Word of God are never raised by active soul-winners. The fundamentals of the faith are in no danger among those who are persistently seeking the lost. Heresy cannot live in an atmosphere created by spiritual health, but will soon go to its own.

When a man gets into personal, first-hand contact with lost men and seeks to win them to Christ, he soon learns how lost they are, and that the only thing that will avail for such great sinners is a great salvation provided by a great Saviour. He will raise no question about the doctrines of sin, depravity, and hell, nor about the doctrines of grace, regeneration, and heaven. He will not listen when any one says there are flaws in "the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God,"[1] for he is using it and he sees how it cuts. A soul-winner who is unsound in doctrine is an impossibility, because the active inflow of the life of Christ makes it impossible.

Then there are the isms, osophies, and ologies of the day. They will find no place where the divine life is abounding. The way to drive heresy out of a church is to make it too warm for the heretics. So if all those in any church who really

[1]Eph. 6:17.

know the Lord would give themselves up to literal obedience to the Lord's command, the resulting abundance of the divine life would soon make it so uncomfortably hot for Eddyites, Russellites, Destructive Critics, and all other heretics, that they would soon be glad to go to their own, while of the rest would no man dare join himself unto them unless he had been really born again. There is no room for false doctrine in a soul-winning church.

2. *A Revival Will Bring Spiritual Health*

SPIRITUALITY WILL ABOUND

We are in a day of multiplying Bible conferences and conventions for the deepening of the spiritual life, and they are proving an increasing blessing to the whole Church of Christ. May they greatly increase in number! But if the spiritual food received in them is not worked out in the normal activity of soul-winning, they may even prove to be a curse. Think of what is likely to result from a lot of suppressed sermons turned sour on our spiritual stomachs! No wonder we have fussy spiritual dyspeptics among us who are ready to fight at a moment's notice over some non-essential doctrinal technicality which is more personal viewpoint than vital principle! No wonder there are a few cranks, fanatics, and extremists abroad in the land! They are usually the kind who would walk a mile to a convention or a conference to hear some famous speaker, while they would hardly walk across the street to take Christ to a lost soul. They

will pray with great fervency, "O Lord, *give* us a blessing," but they will mostly forget to pray, "O Lord, *make* us a blessing."

But those who are really anxious for a deeper experience of God, a greater knowledge of the Word, and a higher reach of spiritual growth will find all these things with unfailing certainty in the work of soul-winning. For nothing else so opens all the avenues of the soul to all that God is to his people and all that he has to reveal of his truth. This is the way to see all the great truths in their relations, and thereby avoid those distressing extremes and vagaries that we sometimes meet with. The teachings received in Bible conferences and like places have a meaning and a value for the persistent soul-winner that *they can have for no one else*, for such a Christian will understand the deep things of God as no one else can. The deep truths of the Word are not open to scholarship, but are understood through the Holy Spirit alone, and the ever-active anointing of the Spirit which abides on the soul-winner makes the deep things plain and the great doctrines luminous. A whole church full of soul-winners is the most responsive congregation to which any spiritual preacher can ever minister in the things of God.

Soul-winning, therefore, will renew the abounding spirituality of the early Church, and bring an abundance of health and vitality that will once more glorify God and his mighty power before men.

THERE WILL BE MATERIAL PROSPERITY

One of the most practical evidences of spiritual vigor in a church is the condition the treasury is in. The spirituality that results from soul-winning activity will end all financial trouble. For the Word says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [the necessary material resources] *shall* be added unto you."[1] Man's method is to reverse this divine program and read it, "Seek ye first many millions of money, and the kingdom of God will be added unto you." But nothing opens the pocket-book and brings the money out in generous streams like the normal working in the heart of that constraining love of Christ that sends us out after the lost. Here alone is the secret of large and continuous missionary giving; here alone is the source of adequate and unstrained financial support of local work. The financial stream will be small and inadequate under the pressure of human mechanics; it will be large and generous under the impulse of divine dynamics.

A wonderful illustration of this principle lies in the success of the Southern Baptists in their great financial effort of 1920, in which $92,500,000 was pledged. The writer wrote and asked Dr. L. R. Scarborough, the leader of the campaign, whether money-raising or soul-winning was most emphasized in the campaign, and he replied, "I did my best as General Director of the $75,000,000 cam-

[1]Matt. 6:33.

paign to set the soul of Southern Baptists from their knees after lost souls. The emphasis was placed on evangelism, missions, enlistment, surrender to God, and the deeper things of the spiritual life, and I feel that the ninety-two and a half million dollars which we secured in cash and pledges came in as a voluntary expression of our people's inner life and love for a lost world. I am more and more convinced that when our people come to God and go with him after the lost, all the needful things for the Kingdom's ongoing will come to us."

The history of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, at Fort Worth, Texas, of which Dr. Scarborough is President, also illustrates what happens in a Seminary when soul-winning is put first. During the season when the Seminary was ten years old, eighty-eight students and members of the faculty held 477 revival campaigns, saw 10,252 profess faith in Christ, baptized 6,080, and brought into Baptist churches by baptism and letter 9,611. This kind of work is the steady and settled program of that Seminary, Dr. Scarborough himself holding from eight to ten evangelistic campaigns a year.

Now notice the financial effect. During the season just mentioned, $318,000 was raised in the meetings for denominational purposes, and at the end of ten years the Seminary itself had assets of a million, practically all of which was raised on the evangelistic note. "Seek ye first the kingdom

of God, and his righteousness; and all these things *shall* be added."[1] *God keeps his word!*

Let any church that is having a hard time financially give itself, in the power of the Spirit, to every-member evangelism, and see if God will not keep his promise. They must go after the lost with no thought of money, of course, leaving that absolutely with God, but no church can possibly give themselves to soul-winning without being blessed financially.

Now if obedience to the Great Commission will give a church vigorous and abounding health in both spiritual and material resources, this includes everything that goes to make up a normal condition in church life.

We have all the evidence by this time that any one can need, therefore, that the only thing that can save the Church out of threatening death and into vigorous life is a literal following of the divine Program. If further evidence is needed, however, it will appear in the next chapter in the form of actual results in a few churches that are approaching this Program. We turn now to the side of the question that has to do with the lost.

[1]Matt. 6:33.

CHAPTER II

THIS PROGRAM WILL REACH THE LOST

IF the Church needs to *express* the divine life in order to keep in health, the lost need to *see* the divine life expressed in order to desire to have it.

The world is always face to face with that kind of life whose mottoes are "Safety first," "Take care of yourself," "Look out for number one"; and there is nothing in it that is attractive or satisfying. But whenever they meet with that kind of life that puts *sacrifice* first, takes care of the *helpless,* and looks out for the *other fellow,* they find themselves in an altogether different realm.

THE MARKS OF THE CROSS

At the heart of the new life in the Christian lies *sacrificial love,* which shows itself out before men in soul-winning service—the personal, private, man-to-man kind. That this takes daily sacrificial living every successful soul-winner will testify. It takes the crucified life to witness to the crucified Christ. No other kind can do so with success.

The reason is that the world has much the same attitude toward the testimony of Christians to the risen Christ that Thomas had toward the testimony of the disciples to him. When they told him Christ had risen, he refused to believe in a risen Christ

until he had seen the marks of the cross on him. And the world will not believe we are risen with Christ, and therefore not in the Christ who is risen, until they can see the marks of his cross on us. It has been said that the world will never believe a man is a Christian until it sees that he has been crucified and lives again.

THE CROSS AND SOUL-WINNING

The evidence of our sacrifice for their salvation must therefore be visible before men are likely to believe in us, and they must believe in *us* before they will pay much heed to our *message*. And we put ourselves where men will believe in us the moment we commit ourselves to life-long sacrificial service for their salvation, for then we can go to them with the marks of the cross upon us. Such Christians can get a hearing for their testimony. Read the biography of Uncle John Vassar for abundant illustration.[1]

But that the world pays little attention to the Church or her message to-day, and that the unsaved are therefore going wholesale to a lost world, has already been abundantly shown. There is certainly a reason for this fearful situation, and we will seek to find it.

I. Why the Church is Failing

The lost are not coming to church services. They never did come in any great numbers, and to-day, in spite of all our modern methods and frantic

[1]American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, $1.00.

appeals, they are coming in smaller and smaller numbers, especially when revival meetings are on. It frequently happens that after a most appealing evangelistic message it is found that not a single unsaved soul is in the audience. Why?

1. The Church is Making the Wrong Appeal.

The thing that is vitally wrong with our appeal is that the dominant emphasis is being placed more and more on those things that can attract only the natural man. We play up the things that are an appeal to the senses. We bait the lost with fine music, beautiful architecture, splendid sociability, sensational topics, racy discussions of current events, and even moving pictures; and the result is that when they do come, they take one sniff at our bait and say "Cheap!" and then go straight back to the world where they can get what they call the "real thing."

Even when a great evangelistic effort is being made, most of the Lord's people resort to an appeal to the natural man to get the lost to the meetings by emphasizing the crowds, the great singing, the spectacular preaching, and other natural attractions, and many an evangelist helps it along by his antics in the pulpit.

Indeed, it is even possible for much of the earnest and sober appeal of evangelist and pastor to be aimed at the natural man only, and much more of that is being done to-day than most of us realize.

Whether a touching story or a direct appeal to the emotions is aimed only at the natural man depends altogether on what lies back of the appeal in the message of the speaker. Actors and novelists make appeal to the emotions, but their appeals are purely to the natural man, with no thought of the glory of God behind them, and are therefore utterly devoid of spiritual value.

A CRIME AGAINST THE LOST

For the Church to make its appeals to the natural man is a *crime against the lost!* For it is not only perfectly useless as a means to reach them for God, but it may even become a sure means of driving them away from God for good. Think what may happen when the lost desert the cheap natural attractions of the Church and go back to the world. They are likely to carry away with them not only an utterly false conception of the nature and mission of the Church, but also a determination never to go back again.

When a great gathering of laboring men will cheer the name of Christ and hiss the mention of the Church, as has been done, it is extremely significant. Of course the cheering may mean nothing as to their real attitude toward Christ, but the hissing clearly indicates their contempt for whatever appeal the Church has made to them.

When the men in the World War gathered to listen to a preacher, if his message was to the natural man and lacked the genuine ring and the

right appeal, they got up and went out. But never did a crowd desert a man who had a heaven-sent appeal. A false note was intolerable to the soldiers, but they were ready for the genuine thing every time.

A HUMILIATION OF CHRIST

The appeal of the Church to the natural man is also a *shameful humiliation of our Lord!* The world has already humiliated him to the utmost limit of human ability, and for the Church to drag him down before a world that loves to see him humiliated is shameful beyond expression.

When will we learn that Christ and his Church are not in the business of attracting men through their senses? When shall we learn that Christ is not in competition with the world for the attraction of the natural man? When shall we learn that the world can outbid us at every point in all those things that make a natural appeal only?

The children of this world are expert at that business, for they not only have the advantage of continued practice, but they have also at hand all the perfected means of appeal, from the most refined to the most degraded, while unregenerate humanity, with an insatiable demand for all that the world has to offer, stands eager to respond to their every appeal.

The Church is operating in an entirely different realm. Our mission lies altogether in the *spiritual* realm, a realm into which the world can never

come, and in which the world can never offer competition.

This is one great reason why Satan tempts us out of our own sphere of appeal into that of the world, for if we yield to the temptation, we not only defeat our *spiritual* appeal or else leave it unmade altogether, but we enter a realm where we will be not only utterly powerless, but where we will even become the hissing and the by-word of the very ones we seek to reach for God. No wonder he is doing his utmost to get the Church into the realm of worldly appeal.

2. *The Church is Using the Wrong Method*

While the lost are in desperate need of what we have to give, yet there is among them no conscious and active demand for it. Their demand for what the world has to offer is intensely alive, and absorbs their whole attention. But their demand for what the Church has to offer is altogether dormant, and they have no time nor attention to give to it.

Now it is impossible, in the nature of things, for any one to be induced to go after something for which he has no conscious and active demand. And so for the Church to make the spiritual appeal to the lost when their demand for spiritual things is dormant, without doing the only thing that will arouse that demand, is a more certain pathway to failure than it can ever be to success. No matter how earnest or even frantic our appeal may be, so long as the lost are conscious of no demand for

what we are offering, our appeal will go all unheeded.

A DEMAND MUST BE CREATED

There is therefore one thing that must always be done before a spiritual appeal can ever mean anything. *A demand for spiritual things must be created.*

This must be one thing Christ had in mind when he told us to go out into the highways and hedges and *compel* them to come in. He did not mean that they are to be taken by physical force and dragged to church, but that we are to do something for them and with them that will create such a demand for the spiritual things the Church has to offer that they will be literally *compelled* to come to church because they cannot stay away.

This is being done universally in business. A merchant can literally compel you to come into his store by creating such a demand for what he has to offer that you are unable to keep from going.

This was done with the writer some years ago, while a pastor in Minneapolis.

Answering the door-bell, a piano personal worker, usually called a salesman, introduced himself and asked if we owned a piano.

I said, "No, but we have an organ that is adequate for our present needs."

"Do you ever expect to own a piano?" he asked.

"Yes," I said, "we may get one some day, but we are not interested now. Good day."

But he gracefully ignored the "Good day," and said, "Have you any children?"

"Yes," I said, "we have two."

"Do you expect to give them music lessons?"

"Yes, after a while, when they are older, but we are not ready yet."

"You will need a piano when they start to take lessons, and it will be to your advantage to get one now while our firm is making a special reduction."

"That might be," I said, "but my present income will not permit of it, and as I am quite busy this morning, I will have to say, Good day!"

But he very skilfully spoiled my "Good day" again by saying in his most engaging manner, "But we have good used pianos that can be bought on payments as low as three dollars a month, and with your permission we will set into your house without obligation for a month any one you want to pick out, used or new."

That was where he got me, though I did not let him know it then.

I said, "That is a very generous offer, but I can't consider it to-day," and he finally left feeling he had lost out.

But within two days I was in that piano store picking out a piano!

How did that salesman get me there?

By coming to my house and doing the kind of personal work that created in me such a demand for what his store had to offer that I could not stay away. There was lying back in my mind a

half intention of owning a piano some day, but it was dormant until that salesman's personal work brought it into such activity that I was *compelled* to go to the store to get it satisfied. That salesman had compelled me to come in.

This is the way to bring the lost to church. Do the thing with them and for them that will create in them such a demand for the spiritual things the Church has to offer that they will be compelled to come in.

GOD MUST CREATE THE DEMAND

But when we begin to inquire how we are to create this demand, we are thrown altogether beyond our own resources. The demand that must be created is a *spiritual* demand, and *only God can create such a demand in the unspiritual soul of a lost man.* We are helpless.

The fact is, not only have the lost no conscious demand for spiritual things, they are naturally antagonistic to them. The one who said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me,"[1] is the very Christ they have turned their backs on and crucified, and a sight of him condemns, and stings, and burns, and they can have no natural desire to go where the one they have sinned against is the sole attraction. The truth is, the heart of the unsaved is *"enmity* against God," and the things of the Spirit of God—spiritual

[1]John 12:32.

things—are *"foolishness"* to them, and they are so naturally incapable of being attracted by the things of the Spirit—indeed, these things are so unattractive to them—that they prefer to stay as far away as possible from the place where these things are the central theme.

There is therefore only one thing that can be done to create a demand for what the Church has to offer. *A miracle must be worked.* Nothing short of this will be of the least avail. For something must take place in the hearts of lost men which will *compel* them to come after what their whole being rebels against. The Christ they have wronged and driven as far out of his own universe as they could get him must somehow become so attractive to them that they will be *compelled* to come to the place where he is lifted up, in spite of all the natural blindness and enmity of their hearts. And only a *miracle* can bring such a thing to pass, and only God can work that miracle.

This is why the Church is failing. We are trying to do with our human methods, and our appeals either to a spiritual demand that has never been created or to the unregenerate heart of the natural man, what a miracle worked by God alone can accomplish. We do not seem to realize that we ourselves can do absolutely *nothing* that will create in the lost such a demand that they will be compelled to come where the Christ they have crucified is held up. We do not seem to understand that an actual miracle is demanded, and that therefore we

are utterly helpless. This brings us to the other side of the question.

II. When the Church Succeeds

That the miracle which compels lost men to come to church and to yield to Christ against their natural inclination is being worked in some lives around us we all know. But that it is not being worked in the hearts of the great masses of unsaved men about us we are also painfully conscious.

Now God can work this miracle when the Church becomes the *channel of his power* between himself and the lost. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we find out just what we must do in order that God may work this miracle through us among the great masses of the unsaved about us. In other words, we must know, if God has revealed it, what is the *fundamental principle* that lies behind his use of us in working the miracle of regeneration. Let us study it.

1. The Fundamental Principle Behind the Program

In bringing the lost to Christ two things must always be done. A demand for spiritual truth that saves must be created, and then this demand must be satisfied.

That which creates this demand is a divinely quickened consciousness of the deep need of salvation, and that which satisfies it is the divinely provided remedy for sin in the blood of Christ.

THE PLACE OF PRAYER

Behind the creation of this demand lies *prayer.* The disciples were saturated with the spirit of prayer when they went among the lost at Pentecost, and prayer has continued to be the background of all real soul-saving work until this hour.

Think why this is. The Lord has told us that the lost cannot receive the Holy Spirit, because they see him not, neither know him, and also that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit—initial among which is conviction of sin—neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.

Then he has also said, "I will send him [the Comforter] unto *you* [not unto the world, notice, for the world cannot receive him]. And when he is come [to *you*], he will reprove the *world* of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."[1]

Do you see where this puts the Lord's people? It puts us squarely between God and the lost in the miracle of the conviction of sin—that miracle which creates a demand for the things of the Spirit contrary to the natural inclinations of the heart. It makes us the channel of God's power between himself and the lost.

The fact that the lost can receive the Holy Spirit in his conviction of sin only through Christians is abundantly illustrated by the fact that they are *never* led to salvation except through those who are saved.

[1] John 16:7-8.

Now prayer somehow gets us into that place where God can use us as channels. One thing it does is to bring us cleansing, and thus fit us to be channels. God's power is a holy power, and he cannot compromise his holiness by letting his holy power flow through an unclean channel. His arm is never shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear, but *our sins* hide his face from us and prevent his saving power from flowing through us. What a fearful thing for a Christian to sin! Sin makes us a *barrier* instead of a *channel!*

Prayer also does another thing. It not only fits us to be channels, but it opens the way for God actually to make channels of us between himself and the lost. Just how he pours his power through us to produce conviction of sin in the lost we shall never know here, but that he actually does it all Christians who pray for the lost can bear abundant testimony. Those who have not seen this miracle wrought have had little or no experience in divine things.

Another thing that must be borne in mind is that it is not only impossible, apart from a miracle, for the natural man to receive the things of the Spirit, but that Satan is also blinding the minds of the unbelieving, "lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should dawn upon them,"[1] and they should be saved. That is, Satan's blinding is directed toward the Gospel, that

[1] 2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

the unsaved may not be able to see or understand it. And so the blindness of men as to what the Gospel really is, being satanic and therefore superhuman, cannot be cured by human means; a miracle is the only thing that will do it. God himself, therefore, must dispel this darkness, and this he does by the illumination of the Holy Spirit wrought through his conviction of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. This means that by a miracle the Holy Spirit illumines the very thing that Satan's superhuman blinding covers up. Conscience can convince a sinner that it is a sin to *do* not, but only the Holy Spirit, through the miracle of his illumination, can convince him that it is a sin to *believe* not,[1] and He does this by holding up the Christ on whom he has not believed, the good news about whom is the Gospel.

It is precisely at this point that prayer does its most effective work. This illuminating work of the Spirit is dependent on prayer. We do not know why this is, nor how prayer opens the way for the Spirit's illumination, but we do know that unless both our witnessing and soul-winning ministry are commenced, carried on, and consummated in prayer, little or no illumination will attend our work. *Nothing* can take the place of prayer. We always advance in our evangelistic work only so fast and so far as we advance on our knees. Prayer produces the atmosphere through which alone sinners can *hear* the Word, and unless they hear the Word the

[1]John 16:9.

Holy Spirit is unable to illumine the blinded mind and convince the heart that their need is Christ alone. Witnessing apart from prayer, no matter how convincing to the reason, or even how convicting to the conscience, may prove to be a "savour of death unto death." Prayer opens, and prayerlessness closes, the channel between some lost soul and God.

THE PLACE OF TESTIMONY

If the Holy Spirit, then, is unable to convict and regenerate except through the Word, he is unable to accomplish his work in a heart until the Word is heard. This requires witnesses. And so just as prayer is needed to open the way for the witnessing, so witnessing is needed to accomplish the work for which the praying opened the way. Neither can be effective apart from the other.

Our witnessing, however, does not produce the conviction and the conversion of all who hear it. The testimony of Christ himself did not produce that result. And the Gospel has never reached all the lost in any given generation from Pentecost until now. Not because God arbitrarily decided that he would not permit it to reach them all, but because those who were not reached by it arbitrarily decided not to permit God to reach them with it.

God foresaw that this would happen, for known to him are all events of both time and eternity, and so he has told us beforehand that it would happen. The Gospel, he said through James, would suc-

ceed in taking *out from among* the Gentiles a people for his name,[1] but not that *all* the Gentiles would come in this age, and certainly not all the Jews, to whom blindness in part has happened until the end of the Age.[2] If the Gospel was intended, therefore, to save all men in any one generation of this age, it has been the most stupendous failure of all human history. It has failed more than sixty times over, for there have been that many generations since Pentecost, and in no generation has there been more than a fraction saved. But if the Gospel was intended to be "the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth,*"[3] then it has never failed in the slightest degree, for every one without exception who has believed it has been saved.

But even though we may know beforehand that many of the unsaved in our personal worlds may not come, that does not release us in the least from our responsibility to take the Gospel to every one and beseech them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. Christ's command was to take the Gospel to *"every creature,"*[4] and all obedient disciples will do this, not knowing as we do so which shall prosper, whether this word of testimony or that.

WITNESSING AND SOUL-WINNING

This brings us to a distinction between simple witnessing and the work of soul-winning, that it is of the utmost importance to recognize. There is a profound difference between them. Witnessing is

[1]Acts 15:14. [2]Rom. 11:25. [3]Rom. 1:16. [4]Mark 16:15.

the divine method of preparing the way for soul-winning, but it does not result in the winning of all to whom we witness. We are to witness to all, without exception, but we can do successful soul-winning work only with those whom the Holy Spirit is able to bring to such a conviction of sin as results in willingness to hear about Christ.

It is because many workers fail to see this distinction, and therefore fail to watch for the evidences of the Spirit's convicting work in the heart, that so many are urged, pushed, crowded, and sometimes even forced to a decision which is superficial because it is not wrought by the Holy Spirit.

Few even of the most earnest workers seem to know that there are two kinds of conviction of sin: that of conscience, and that of the Holy Spirit. Dr. A. J. Gordon spoke of the former as "legal" conviction, and of the latter as "evangelical" conviction. And it is because of ignorance at this point that so many workers urge those who have only a stirred conscience to a decision that does not last, because behind it there is only the power of a human resolution.

The difference between these two kinds of conviction is very radical, and very plain to the spiritually-minded when once they have seen it. Conscience convicts us of a broken law; the Holy Spirit of a rejected Christ. Conscience gives us a vision of sin committed; the Holy Spirit of sin canceled. Conscience speaks to us in terms of morality; the Holy Spirit in terms of spirituality. Conscience

seeks to produce good works in us; the Holy Spirit seeks to produce faith in us. Conscience urges us to repentance toward a past life; the Holy Spirit to "repentance toward God."[1] Conscience leads us to conversion to a higher ideal of living; the Holy Spirit to conversion to Christ. Conscience is always busy in all men, either accusing or else excusing; the Holy Spirit operates only in those to whom he is permitted to give the vision of a crucified Christ. This shows why we must witness to *all,* for only so can the way be opened for the Spirit to give a saving vision of Christ to *all* who are willing to receive it.

When these distinctions are clearly seen it becomes easy to tell when the Spirit is working in a heart, and when the interest is produced only by a stirred conscience. The one in whom conscience only is at work will talk freely and even intelligently in terms of morality and the humanities but will not know where we are going when we show the utter worthlessness of all human doings and begin to witness to Christ. Only when the Spirit is permitted to dispel Satan's blinding by the miracle of his illumination will the meaning of Christ's work on the cross begin to dawn.

It is precisely because so many workers, yes, even some pastors and evangelists, fail to see the vital distinction between these two kinds of conviction that the number is increasing in our churches who, urged to it only by the lashings of an accusing con-

[1]Acts 20:21.

science, were converted simply to a higher ideal of living, but have no knowledge whatever of salvation through Christ. In too many cases our evangelistic special efforts and campaigns and drives have increased church-membership as their goal more than the winning of the lost to Christ, and the appeal that is made to the lost and the methods that are used to reach them are in harmony with this program rather than with the divine Program. This is the tragedy of altogether too much of our evangelistic work to-day.

It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that we see these distinctions just outlined, in order that we may not bungle in this most important of all Christian service. While our testimony is to be given to all, our efforts to bring acceptance of Christ are to be put forth only with those whom the Holy Spirit points out to us as being made ready by his work to accept Christ. That is, we need to be exceedingly careful about either going ahead of the Spirit or falling behind his leadings. To urge a person to a surrender for which the Holy Spirit has not been permitted to prepare him is a grave mistake, and to fail to bring a person to a decision, under the enabling of the Spirit, that he is ready to make, is an equally grievous blunder. We need to be utterly under the Spirit's direction in this work.

There is another point, also, on which we need to be clear. If we see no response to our testimony and no evidence of the Spirit's work after bearing

witness a few times to a given lost soul, we are not to conclude that he will *never* be able to do his work in that heart and that therefore we need say no more about Christ to him. For we are to bear our testimony to all the unsaved, no matter how unresponsive they may seem, until our opportunities are gone, hoping that some word may yet get the heart open for the Spirit to do his work. We are not to try to force a decision to accept Christ when the Spirit has not been permitted to give such a vision of him as will produce a divinely wrought conviction, but we are not therefore to stop all witnessing, for it may be that one more word concerning our Lord will be just the word the Spirit can use.

But it is of the greatest importance here also that we should be constantly under the Spirit's control, for if we are not, our continued witnessing is in grave danger of degenerating into nagging, and will then repel and drive men away from Christ instead of bringing them to him.

Indeed, when the Spirit really begins his work in a heart, little or no persuasion is necessary, and certainly no crowding or forcing. There was no coaxing on the Day of Pentecost. Instead, those with whom the Spirit was at work came to Peter and to the rest and cried, "What shall we do?"[1] And to-day in any evangelistic service where the Spirit is powerfully at work, the lost come to Christ without any high pressure methods of any kind. Tricks played on an audience and traps to force

[1]Acts 2:37.

the unsaved into decisions they do not really make are resorted to only when man's methods are substituted for the divine Program.

THE REASON FOR THE DIVINE PROGRAM

This brings us to where we can begin to see more clearly why the Lord gave us precisely the Program he did rather than some other. Witnessing is the divinely appointed method of seeking for the lost. Not for church-members, but for lost souls. For this is the *only* method by which it is possible to find among the lost *all* those who can be brought to respond to the Spirit's conviction of sin. This is so because it is only the goodness of God in Christ on the cross that can lead to repentance, and it is only by witnessing to *all* concerning the crucified Christ, that the Spirit is able to quicken those who are willing into such a vision of him as will produce that conviction of sin which alone can lead to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The lost must be sought and found of the Holy Spirit before they can be saved, and he can find those who are willing to be saved only through our testimony.

We can also see why we are commanded to *take* our testimony to the lost, and not to expect them to come after it. It is only the vision of a crucified Christ that can bring men to conviction, and until that work is done in the heart through our testimony to Christ, there is no real demand for what the Church has to offer.

This shows the folly of expecting the lost to come to the services of the Church when we have done nothing to create a demand for them, and also the folly of seeking to create that demand by any other than the divine Program.

When all these facts are taken in, we begin to see why it is that the Lord's people must give themselves to prayer accompanied by witnessing, and to witnessing saturated with prayer; and why the Lord has commanded every disciple to go everywhere bearing private testimony to Christ, in the power of the Spirit, to all the lost in their individual worlds; and why it is that certain disciples selected by the Holy Spirit must give their whole time both to private and to public teaching and testimony, and to the training of the rest of the disciples in that service which alone can build up the Church both in numbers and in spirituality.

When this program is followed, God is then able, and only then, to work those miracles of both creating such a demand as will bring the lost in great numbers to the services of the Church, and of supplying that demand by new life in Christ. This is a fundamental reason for the Great Commission Program.

A striking illustration of this Program at work on a small scale occurred in an evangelistic campaign the writer was conducting in a small Canadian city. A community dance was put on every night for the last two weeks of the meetings to draw the young people away. A young lady was

under deep conviction of the Spirit, and in answer to her natural inclinations was trying to get away from it. And so each day of the last week she made an engagement to attend the dance that night, and yet each night found her in the meeting with her dance engagement broken. Time and again she said she did not know why she was at church, for she certainly did not want to come, but she seemed unable to stay away. Conviction deepened until on the last night she accepted Christ.

Now how was this brought about? By the private praying and personal testimony of two girl friends, converted the first week of the meetings, reaching its climax and culmination in the public testimony of the evangelist's messages. By following the Program of the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was able, through those two young women, to work the miracle of creating such a demand for the things of the Spirit in that girl's heart that, in spite of her inclinations to the contrary, she was literally *compelled* to come to church. And then by following that Program without let-up, as the Spirit led, he was able to work the consummating miracle of supplying the demand he had been permitted to create, by bringing her to the new birth. *When we obey, God does the rest.*

2. The Present Day Practice of the Program

It will be both inspiring and confirming to note how the New Testament Program reaches the lost, even when it is only partially followed, and so we

will give heed to some of the things the Lord is doing through a few of his yielded people.

IN A FEW METHODIST CHURCHES

In the literature of the Methodist Forward Movement of 1920 is the story of a church long without revival in which one hundred and forty teams of four each reached one hundred and fifty-three for Christ in sixty days, largely by personal work.

In a suburban New York church that had not had a conversion for years, the young people were spurred to action and went after their chums, which resulted in thirty-two joining the church in one evening.

In a church in which over four hundred members were sick, and in spite of very bad weather and almost impassable roads, in a six weeks' revival campaign one hundred and eight were converted through a well-organized campaign of personal work. During four years in that church personal evangelism was much emphasized, and during that time 1,158 came into the church, 974 of whom came as a direct result of personal evangelism.

In another church in which the Official Board led the way in personal work, the membership was increased from six hundred to twenty-one hundred in a little more than four years.

IN A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Somewhere the writer has seen the story of a Presbyterian church that had gone over a year without a conversion. The pastor called the Session together and offered to resign.

The officials strongly objected to the pastor's purpose, and said they were being edified, and there was no need of his resigning.

"Edified for what?" asked the pastor.

In the conversation that followed the pastor finally turned to the chairman of the Session and asked, "Do you believe that through you a soul has ever been saved?"

"No," said the official. And all the rest of the Board had to give the same answer.

Then the pastor said, "Unless the Lord gives this church souls in the near future, I shall ask that you also resign as the elders of it."

"But we are getting along very well," they said.

"No, we are not getting along at all," said the pastor.

And then he got them to their knees where they dedicated themselves to the work of soul-winning.

This was on Saturday night. On Monday morning the chairman of that Session spoke to his confidential clerk and said, "How long have you worked for me, Bob?"

"Fifteen years," he said.

Then the employer said, "I am an elder in the church you attend when you go anywhere. You are not a Christian. I know it and have known it all the time, and yet have never said a word to you about it. But my soul is on fire now, and I want that we both get down and give ourselves to Christ. I will do it for greater consecration and you for salvation."

The young man knelt and received Christ right there, and that elder led ten others of his employees to accept Christ that day. The other elders were doing the same thing in other places of business that week, and the next Sunday over thirty joined that Presbyterian church as a result of that work.

DR. R. A. TORREY'S SUCCESS

The Moody church of Chicago is known all over Christendom. During the eight years that Dr. R. A. Torrey was pastor of that church, more than two thousand members were received into it, and other thousands who had been won to Christ in that church joined other churches. The secret of this, and of the continued great work of that church, lies in the persistent personal work of the members.

During Dr. Torrey's great meetings in Birmingham, England, when nearly eight thousand came to Christ in one month, Dr. Torrey himself has said that the great results were made possible because of the personal work that accompanied the preaching.

SPURGEON'S CHURCH

We have all marveled at the great numbers brought to Christ under Spurgeon's wonderful ministry, and the most of us have supposed that of course it was Spurgeon's preaching. But that was only a part of the secret. The other part of it was the fact that once a year, for many years, three thousand and more of his members came for-

ward in a church service, and, in a most solemn pledge, took his hand in token that for another year they would together give themselves to the work of taking Christ to the lost.

The result was that Spurgeon never stood up to preach without looking into the faces of scores of unsaved people to whom his own members had been witnessing to Christ in their own homes, and who had had the demand for salvation sufficiently aroused to come to the church services to get that demand satisfied. Like Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Spurgeon's sermons were the climax of the witnessing to Christ that had preceded, and the private witnessing, reaching its climax in the public testimony, bore a wonderful harvest for God.

Who could not preach in power in an atmosphere created by such a passion for the lost, and who could not be a soul-winning preacher with three thousand Christians backing him with the kind of praying and personal work that such a passion produces!

A PITTSBURGH EXPERIENCE

Among the many practical illustrations of the working of this divine Program which have occurred in the writer's ministry, none has ever been more striking than one which occurred in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a few years ago.

For many weeks he had been stated supply of a church in the city. Some things had been said about the preaching to a young Scotchman by one

of the members that had made him determine to come and hear the preacher. The young man was under conviction of sin, but his friend could not get him over the line.

One Sunday night in midsummer he was in the service—the only one he was able to attend that summer. The sermon announced required the use of the blackboard. After the people were all in and the service had begun, a storm broke, accompanied by much lightning. Every time the lightning flashed near by the electric lights grew dim and once or twice went out for a moment.

Finally, just as the writer was ready to announce the text, the lights went out permanently, and no light could be provided except a couple of candles. A blackboard sermon was out of the question. So while the congregation sang and the candles were being placed, the writer sought the Lord for text and message, and the Holy Spirit gave him Pilate's question, "What shall I do then with Jesus who is called Christ?[1] The text was chosen with no knowledge of the young Scotchman present, nor that any one under conviction was in the audience.

During the progress of the message conviction was deepened, questions were answered, perplexities were cleared up, until, before the message was ended, that young man lifted his heart and silently accepted Christ, witnessing to it with great joy after the service. The personal work of his friend needed just the message of that service to bring conviction

[1]Matt. 27:22.

of sin to the climax of decision, and the Lord put the lights out in order to bring it about!

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps on the sea,
And *rides upon the storm!*"

A SEATTLE CHURCH

One of the most remarkable illustrations of the practical working and certain fruitage of the divine Program is in the history of the First Presbyterian church in Seattle, Washington, Dr. Mark A. Matthews, pastor.

The city is divided into thirty-two districts, every district thoroughly officered for the purpose of having the work systematically done.

Among the obligations that the members take when they come into the church is the vow that they will do all they can to bring others to Christ, and into the church.

And this work is seriously undertaken. Not only are the members constantly seeking the lost who live in Seattle, but when a new family moves into any section of the city, within a short time some member of that church is in the home giving them cordial welcome to their services, and opening the way for further personal work if they are not Christians.

The result is that at the beginning of 1920 there were about seven thousand members in that church, 854 of them—a good-sized church in itself—having

entered the membership during 1919, of whom 545 came on confession of faith.

Is there any reason why any church anywhere should not be reaping a similar harvest? None whatever except that *the harvesters are not out in the harvest field at work.* And this is the crime of the professing church to-day. While we are begging the Lord to send the sheaves in to be gathered, a ripened harvest is going to eternal waste because the laborers are not going out into the field to gather it in.

There had just been a fearful storm that had utterly ruined a splendid crop of grain. Other crops all about had been gathered before the storm struck, but this one could not be harvested for lack of help.

The owner of the crop stood at the fence, after the storm had passed, looking at his ruined harvest, his face a picture of sadness and dejection.

A stranger coming along the road came up to the fence and stood in silence for a moment beside the farmer.

Then he said, "It's a pretty sad sight, isn't it?"

The owner said, "You would think it was sad if it was your field."

"Why didn't you harvest it before the storm came?" asked the stranger.

"Because I couldn't get any harvesters," was his sad reply, as he turned on his heel and went to the house.

WHERE ARE THE LORD'S HARVESTERS?

If you who read these pages are a professed follower of Christ, and yet you are not out in the harvest field laboring to gather the harvest before the storm comes, the words of the late Charles M. Alexander, the great song leader, are for you. He said, "Anybody who is not doing personal work has sin in his life. I don't care who you are—preacher, teacher, mother, father—if you are not leading definite people to a definite Saviour at a definite time, or trying hard to do so, you have sin in your life."

If this is true—and it certainly is, for disobedience to the Great Commission is sin—what a weight of guilt is resting on a multitude of Christians in the Church to-day!

The preceding illustrations of what happens when a church even approximates obedience to the Great Commission are a terrible condemnation of those guilty Christians in every church who are content to live within daily reach of multitudes of lost men and women without ever making a direct personal effort to rescue them. Oh, that the Church might be so aroused that she would literally follow the Program of the risen Lord according to the pattern of the Day of Pentecost! Then would we see the world-wide revival that many have so long been praying for. Then would the harvest be gathered before the storm breaks and it is eternally too late.

"The time will come," said a prominent minister to his morning congregation in which were many

well-known manufacturers, "when all that will be left in the created universe will be two things: on the one side, a heap of ashes; on the other, a myriad million of undying souls saved or lost. In the ash heap will be all your machines, your gold and your silver, your stocks and your bonds, your shops and your lands. In the midst of the myriad million souls will be the men and women who have toiled for you. What will you have to say to them before the Great White Throne?"

What will you who read these lines have to say to the lost you might have won to Christ?

We close this chapter as it was begun. The cross must come off from our church spires, our necklaces, and our watch chains and get into our lives. We must come to an end of our selfish unwillingness to dedicate ourselves to soul-winning, and accept the brand marks of the cross in our lives that we may bear them about with us wherever we go. We must put ourselves where we can preach a crucified Saviour by daily living the crucified life. Then will the fragrance of our lives win the lost to listen to our testimony to him who is the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely.

Dr. George W. Truett, of Dallas, Texas, tells what the brand marks of the cross did for those who beheld them on an occasion when he was raising the money to dedicate a church building.

The amount to be raised was $6,500. After what he calls the slowest, most reluctant, most Christ-

shaming effort to raise money he ever witnessed, they stopped at three thousand dollars.

After a long pause, Dr. Truett said, "What do you expect of me? I am your guest. I do not happen to have the other $3,500. What do you expect of me?"

Then there arose a little woman back in the audience, plainly clad. "There was a surpassing pathos in her voice," says Dr. Truett, "as looking past me to the young man at the desk who was taking the names—her husband—she said, 'Charley, I have wondered if you would be willing for us to give our little cottage, just out of debt. We were offered $3,500 in cash for it yesterday. We were told we could get it at the bank any time in ten days, if we chose to make the trade. Charley, I have wondered if you would be willing for us to give our little house to Christ that his house may be free. When we remember, Charley, that Christ gave his life for us, I wonder if we ought not to give this little house to him.'

"The fine fellow responded in the same high spirit with a sob in his voice, saying: 'Jennie, dear, I was thinking of the same thing.' Then looking up at me with his face covered with tears, he said, 'We will give $3,500.'

"Then there followed a scene beggaring all description. Silence reigned for a minute, and then men sobbed aloud, and gentle women and men standing around the walls, who a dozen minutes before had shut their lips with scorn and contempt

for a church halting and defeated, sobbed aloud, and almost in a moment provided the $3,500."

That was wonderful enough to have stopped right there, but the most wonderful part of the whole scene followed after the money was raised. For "without invitation," continues Dr. Truett, "there came down every aisle to where I stood men and women, saying, 'Sir, where is the Saviour, and how can we find him?' "

The Christ of the cross had been lifted up in two crucified lives, and he had drawn men unto himself as he had promised.

Part III

THE DIVINE POWER

INTRODUCTORY

IN the previous pages we have had a glimpse of the desperate condition of an indifferent Church and the appalling need of a lost world.

We have found also that to follow the Program which the Lord laid out for his people is the only possible method of correcting the growing ills in the Church and of meeting the needs of the lost around us.

But this method is not being followed, in spite of the fact that it is simplicity itself, and in spite of the most earnest efforts of many godly ministers to get their churches to do so. Churches everywhere will follow other programs with enthusiasm, but not this one. What is the reason?

The answer is not far to find. This Program is altogether *divine,* and so it is impossible to carry it out except by *divine power.* Those who attempt to work by this method are shut up to the power from on high in order to get *spiritual results.* Nothing else will bring such results, and many are unwilling to pay the price for that power. It is too high for them, for it is nothing short of complete death to all we are and have.

A man had given himself to Christ for Africa. A friend said to him, "Isn't it dangerous to go so far away from civilization, where you will have no help and no medicine in sickness? Aren't you afraid you'll die?"

"I died when I decided to go," said the missionary.

In precisely the same way must every Christian die when he decides to go into his own personal world—his missionary field—to take Christ to the lost. And the present unspiritual, worldly, pleasure-loving atmosphere of the Church makes this price seem impossible.

THE REASON FOR SUBSTITUTE PROGRAMS

This is why we are so busy making and following human programs. For to follow the divine Program requires us to pay a price that even many leaders in the Church seem unwilling to pay. And so we busy ourselves with programs of civilization, education, social service, and a dozen other by-products of evangelism, and let straight-out personal work for lost souls go, never seeming to realize that when we stop evangelizing the by-products will disappear in spite of all we can do to continue them.

Substitute programs are no new thing. Satan presented no less than three different ones to Christ in the wilderness temptation, by at least one of which he guaranteed world-conquest. And substitute programs accompanied by the same guaranty

are being presented to the Church to-day. Shall we fall where our Lord stood? He turned from all of them and went to the cross! "He saved others; himself he cannot save."[1] Shall we save ourselves from the cross? Then others we cannot save!

NOT PROGRAMS BUT POWER

It is not programs we lack, it is *power!* The Lord has given us our Program, and it is an insult to him to attempt to make any other. We have nothing to do but to follow it.

In the previous pages we have sought to trace our trouble back step by step in the hope of finally reaching the root difficulty. We are now at the very heart of it. We are not following the Lord's Program, and this is the reason for our failure. We are not possessed by the power from on high, and this is the reason we are not following the Program. And we are not willing to go to the cross, and this is the reason we are not possessed by the power from on high.

In many discussions of personal evangelism the heart of the matter seems to be left out. The impression is too often left that the Lord's command to go after the lost ought to be enough for any Christian. *But it is not enough!* The Great Commission is sufficient *authority,* but it is *not sufficient motive.* It is not the imperative of an external command that sends us after the lost, it is the im-

[1] Matt. 27:42.

pulse of an indwelling Presence. We may be commanded forever to take the Gospel to the lost and it will never move us, but when we are fully possessed and controlled by him whose life it was to seek and to save the lost, we shall go, command or no command. Back of all successful work for the lost is an inward spiritual impulse; and back of the impulse is the Holy Spirit who reproduces Christ in us; and the brand mark of it all is the cross, the living experience of which must both enter and control the life before we are fit for service.

We shall therefore consider the divine motive power behind obedience to the Great Commission. It is Christ himself, empowering us to live by his indwelling life, and impelling us to witness by his overflowing love. As we seek the significance of his indwelling life working in us, both the meaning of the cross and the method of taking it into our personal experience will unfold before us. Then as we study the secret of his saving love flowing through us, the impelling power of his risen life in our lives, and the compelling power of his redeeming love over the lost will break upon our vision.

CHAPTER I

THE EMPOWERING LIFE OF CHRIST

THE divine power is the life of Christ, crucified and risen again, dwelling in us. The beginning of this indwelling was what the disciples were commanded to wait for when Christ went away, and what they received on the day of Pentecost.

This does not mean that they were not born again until Pentecost, for there is plenty of evidence that they were, but that the Holy Spirit began his official mission on earth on that day. That official mission is the baptism of all true disciples into that one body through which Christ continues his work of seeking the lost, being not only the head directing the work, but also the power by which the work is to be done; the directing and empowering being actualized within the Church by the Holy Spirit.

The disciples were therefore commanded to tarry until the Holy Spirit came to begin his mission of actualizing within them the indwelling Christ, and told that then, and not before, they would become effective witnesses unto him. They must be possessed by the divine power before they would be enabled to obey the divine command and follow the

divine pattern. Human mechanics are of no avail here; it takes divine dynamics.

And this is true to this hour. The Lord's people can no more obey the divine command until they have become possessed by the divine power to-day, than they could in the beginning.

Now the only way to become possessed by the divine power is to come under the complete and constant control of the indwelling divine life, and this is impossible without such a living experience of the cross that self will cease its activity and the life of Christ will be enthroned and put into active command.

In a very simple and practical way, therefore, we shall seek to find what it means to be crucified with Christ, and also the method of receiving the cross into our experience.

I. The Meaning of the Crucified Life

Pride is the very essence of the natural man. It is seen in the sinner in his refusal to surrender, and in the Christian in his failure to keep surrendered. Self *must* keep doing something. To be compelled to cease all activity is the keenest pain to the flesh, because pride is cut to the heart. To be considered incapable—so incapable that *nothing* self can do is acceptable to God—this is intolerable beyond expression.

This gives us a clue to the meaning of the cross in experience. Absolute surrender to the will of God puts self out of activity; it consigns self to the

cross where all its doing will cease. To do this is to enter the crucified life.

Now, to apply this to our obedience to the Great Commission, in order to enter the crucified life we must first see and acknowledge that—

1. We are Utterly Unable to Obey

We are *perfectly helpless—utterly strengthless,* and therefore *totally incapable* of obeying the very least of the Lord's commands, and we certainly have no ability to obey this greatest of all his commands.

(1) We are unable because we *are* nothing.

Many of us think that we are at least a little something, but as long as we think so we are not in the place of power for service. We are *nothing,* and we have nothing to exhibit to the world. And even if we had, the world would not be interested in seeing it, for they are saying, not, "Show us what you have," but, "Show us the *Father,* and it sufficeth us."[1]

Now if, to satisfy the heart yearning of a dying world, we busy ourselves in showing them our equipment, our wealth, our institutions, our programs, our creeds, our denominations, instead of showing them the Father through the indwelling Christ, it will be because our pride and self-sufficiency have not yet been swallowed up in utter abandonment to him who is our *all.*

We must be so completely hidden away in Christ that the world will no longer see us, but the Christ

[1]John 14:8.

who liveth in us. How can we approach men with a *divine* message when the *human* is all they can see in us? Like the shoe salesman who always wore the same goods that he sold and always exhibited them to all to whom he tried to sell, so we must always exhibit Christ to those to whom we testify of Christ; and this we can never do until we get to the place where we are willing to acknowledge that we are nothing and he is all. He must actually *be* our all in our daily conscious experience, or we can never show a dying world how sufficient he is for all their need. We must be able to show the goods we advertise.

This we not only *can* do but *will* do from the moment we so yield that Christ can really live his life in us and thus become our character in daily living, and our power in daily service. This is the life "hid with Christ in God." This is the life in which we are literally nothing and he is all. This is the life through which the world can see him who reveals the Father.

(2) We are unable to obey because we can *do* nothing.

This is a hard lesson to learn. It is so hard that many never learn it. Even those who are very sure they could never do personal soul-winning work with the lost are just as sure there are some things they *can* do.

Many Christians have the false notion that if we will only do all *we* can, then the Lord will come in and add his strength to ours; but that we cannot

expect him to do so until we have done all we can. Spiritual empowering to them is his great strength added to our little strength. Indeed, there are many who seem to think that the characteristic difference between the lost and the saved is that the saved have accepted the *help* of the Lord which the lost have rejected.

But the difference is *vital.* That is, it is the difference between *life* and *death.* Christian living is not our living with Christ's *help,* it is *Christ living his life in us.* Therefore that portion of our lives that is not of his living is not Christian living; and that part of our service that is not of his doing is not Christian service; for all such life and service have but a human and natural source, and Christian life and service have a superhuman and spiritual source.

This was precisely what Christ meant when he said, "Apart from me ye can *do nothing.*"[1] And Paul said the same thing from the opposite angle in the words, "I can *do all things through Christ* which strengtheneth me."[2] And in another place he explains *how* he can do all things through Christ when he says, "I live; yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me:* and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."[3] That is, Christ lived his own life in and through Paul, and this was made possible through Paul's faith.

[1]John 15:5 (Gr.). [2]Phil. 4:13. [3]Gal. 2:20.

LIVING BY FAITH, NOT WORKS

Think of what faith is and this will be plain. Faith is surrender to some one else to do for us what we cannot possibly do for ourselves. What we do for ourselves is all of works and not of faith. What we surrender to some one else to do for us is all of faith and not of works.

Now how much of his life did Paul live, and how much did Christ live? Did Paul do his part and then let Christ make up what he could not do? Was Christ Paul's *helper,* or was he Paul's *life?* When Paul said, "To me to live *is Christ,*"[1] did he mean, "To me to live is to be *helped to live* by Christ"?

"The just shall *live* by *faith*"[2]; "Without *faith* it is impossible to please him"[3]; "*Whatsoever* is not of *faith* is *sin*"[4]; said Paul; and thus recognizing that faith and works cannot be mixed in the continuance of the Christian life any more than they can in the beginning of it, he turned it all over so completely to Christ that he himself no longer lived it, but Christ lived his life in him in response to Paul's faith.

This is living the Christian life. Nothing else is. For any life that is not of *faith* is of *works,* and is therefore *sin,* and a life of sin is not Christian living. A person may be a Christian and still be attempting to live by works; but he cannot do any real Christian living except by faith.

And yet there are many Christians who are ready

[1]Phil. 1:21. [2]Gal. 3:11. [3]Heb. 11:6. [4]Rom. 14:23.

to say in prayer-meeting, with becoming modesty, so they think, "I am still striving to serve the Lord in my poor, weak way." But the fact is, the Lord never asked us to serve him in our poor, weak way, and he is not the least pleased with that kind of service. He has asked us to *surrender to him,* and let him *serve himself through us* in his *strong and mighty way.* So long as we are strong enough to be even weak we are too strong for him. It is only when we become utterly strengthless that his strength becomes available. "For when I am weak [*utterly strengthless,* in the Greek], then am I strong,"[1] says Paul.

The conclusion of all this is that no matter what our natural endowments and training may be, obedience to the Great Commission is impossible to all except those who realize that they can *do nothing.*

(3) We are unable to obey because we can *give* nothing.

This is especially the place where active and trained workers fail. What are all their training and experience for if not to equip them to *give something* to those whom they seek to serve in the Master's name? What is all their knowledge for if not to *give* to others? Why the natural endowments the Lord gave them if not to make their giving to others more effective?

You recall that Christ imagined a man who had a friend come to see him, arriving at midnight, and he had nothing to set before him. So empty was

[1] 2 Cor. 12:10.

he of everything that he had to go to some one else for bread to set before his friend.[1]

By that parable the Lord intends us to understand that we too have nothing to set before a famishing world, and if we set anything before them at all, we must go outside ourselves and our own resources to get it; and if we go to him who has the bread of life to give, we can get as many loaves as we need.

THE REASON MANY FAIL

Many a Sunday-school teacher will work hard on a lesson until the preparation is thorough and splendid, and then go before the class with the feeling, "I certainly have something to give the class to-day. This is a great lesson, and I am going to have a great time giving them what I have dug out of it." And then how many times they will find no response from the class, and wonder why all the thorough preparation seems to go for nothing.

And many a preacher will go before the people with the calm assurance that he has something worth while to give them now, whether he ever had before or not, and then find himself pumping and perspiring before an audience that he is conscious is getting nothing. And he recalls more than one service when, because of unusual demands on his time, he has gone before them with nothing but a text, and to his own joy and the great refreshing

[1] Luke 11:5-8.

of his people, he has found himself the channel of a message from the very throne.

And many a personal worker will prepare very thoroughly for an interview with some one he is seeking to lead to Christ, and then go to him with the feeling that what he has to give him ought certainly to bring him this time, and then be compelled to leave with the feeling that the one he is after is farther away from Christ than he was before the interview.

What does all this mean? Is it wrong to make thorough preparation? Should we throw all preparation to the winds and simply open our mouths and expect the Lord to fill them?

Most emphatically, no! It is not wrong to make the most thorough preparation possible. The fatal mistake comes in thinking that our preparation has given us something of our own which we can in turn give to others. It is pride of equipment that causes our defeat. And we shall fail every time we put confidence in our preparation, for then our trust is not in God. The most splendid ability and the most elaborate equipment are but the tray on which to serve the bread of life, and if we put confidence in the tray instead of in him who alone can put the bread on it, we are defeated before we start our serving. We have nothing, and the sooner we learn it, the sooner we shall come to depend utterly on him who alone has to give what this old hungry and starving world needs. If, after we have made our utmost preparation, we go to God and tell him the

tray is ready, and then ask him to put the bread of life on it that we may serve it, we will then be where the Lord can use our preparation to his own glory.

It is precisely at this point that many workers, and all the shirkers, fail. The ever-present and powerful temptation of the workers is to depend on endowment, preparation, and equipment, thereby putting all their splendid capacities directly in God's way. And it is the constant temptation of the shirkers to imagine that none can become soul-winners except those who have an ability, experience, and preparation that they themselves do not possess, and therefore they are excused. But the fact is that neither the great capacity of the one nor the limited capacity of the other is anything to God except a vehicle on which to convey the bread of life to the famishing. That man of very limited capacity had it right when he said in his prayer, "O Lord, thou knowest my capacity is very small and I can't hold much, but, Lord, I can overflow a great deal."

WHAT THE CROSS IS FOR

We can now begin to see what the cross is for. We *are* nothing, we can *do* nothing, and we can *give* nothing—not from the moment when we consent to surrender and become helpless before God, but all the time, whether we realize and acknowledge it or not. Imagining that we are something, and can do and give something of spiritual value, can never

make these things facts. They are not now, they never have been, and they never will be facts. The only part of us that is not utterly helpless is the self-life, and that is very powerful and active. And when there is prospect of its activity being ended, it seeks to avoid it by becoming very kind-hearted, benevolent, generous, and even religious; but it is utterly incapable of doing anything *spiritual,* and therefore it can do nothing but get in God's way so long as it is allowed the slightest activity.

And so the cross is for that life that *is* something. It must be reckoned as on the cross, so that Christ can make its activity to end. We are nothing, and when we come to a complete end of all our doing, then the cross has begun to operate in our lives.

We surely cannot have missed the illustration of this that Christ gave us in his life. As a man filled with the Holy Spirit he was constantly emphasizing his utter dependence on the Father. Whatever he was he received from God, and the words that he spoke and the works that he wrought *all* came from the Father. He was literally living the crucified life, because of which the Father was his constant enabling.

The conclusion is that *we are utterly unable to obey the Great Commission.* This must be willingly realized and acknowledged before we can see the other side of this great truth, which is,

2. Christ is Perfectly Able to Obey

No one would think of denying or even doubting

this, so long as we think of Christ in his own person. But when we seek to make a practical application of it, and confess that he is perfectly able to do *in* us all that he requires *of* us, it immediately becomes another matter. We are perfectly aware that all his almightiness is available for us, but when we put it in the light that he is to do our obeying through us by his own power, it becomes a puzzle to many. Where do *we* come in?

CHRISTIAN LIVING ALL OF GRACE

Stop and think a minute. Christ's ability on our behalf is available *only on the basis of grace,* and most of us know all too little about the meaning of grace. Grace means that God does it *all* while we *consent.*

Paul speaks of Christ as the one "Who is our life."[1] Not "Who *gives* us life," but "Who *is* our life." And again we are told that God has "given to us eternal life, and *this life is in his Son.*"[2] This is why it is that only he who *"hath the Son* hath life."[3]

Now if Christ is our life, you cannot fail to see what bearing this has on our obedience. Whatever is done for, in, or through the Christian, his life must do it. If the life does not do it, it cannot possibly be done. Whatever is done for, in and through my physical body, is done by my physical life. In the same manner, whatever is done for, in, or through the Church, the body of Christ, he who is our life must do. Apart from him neither

[1]Col. 3:4. [2]1 John 5:11. [3]1 John 5:12.

the body nor any member of the body can do anything; he himself says so. His body is as helpless as any body without life, or with life present and completely inactive. This must mean that whatever is done in a Christian in obedience to any of God's commands, *Christ himself must do*. And he does do it, when we consent, for he is perfectly able; Therefore,

(1) Christ himself is our *victory*.

When some harmful thing seeks entrance into my physical being, it is my physical life that warns me against it. When that which is harmful slips past the guards into the system, it is the physical life that rises up at once and concentrates all its forces to fight it and drive it out. And when victory over harmful forces is won, it is the life that wins the victory.

Even so is it with the Christian. And yet how few have ever learned it! When the enemy to spiritual health seeks entrance, instead of instantly turning the temptation over to him who is our life, we set our jaws, stiffen our muscles, and then fight with desperate stubbornness, meanwhile calling on our Life to *help* us, and finally go down to defeat. Of course! There never is and never can be victory until we are at an end of all our effort and turn it over completely to him. When temptation comes, let him handle it. We are no match for Satan, but *he is*. Let him be the victory.

And this old self-life that is within us—let him take care of that. We do not have to nail it to the

cross, nor take the stenchful thing into the dissecting room and carve it up piece by piece. He himself, through the Holy Spirit, is an end to all the activity of self, just as heat puts an end to the condition of cold. If you want the darkness driven out, simply give the light a chance. And if you want to have the self-life put out of business, turn it over to Christ and reckon on him. "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin ("sin" in this passage means self), but alive unto God *in Christ Jesus*";[1] not living by any effort of your own, but living *in Christ,* his life doing the living in you. This will put self completely out of business, for all chance for even the slightest activity will be gone.

Remember how Paul puts it when he is speaking of the works of the flesh. He does not say, *Put away* bitterness, wrath, anger, and so on, but *"Let* all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and railing *be put away* from you with all malice."[2] Let Christ do it. If he cannot handle every form of the enemy's activity without our help, it cannot be done! But he can, for he is able.

(2) Christ himself is our *character.*

He does not simply give us character, he *is* our character. Character is received, not achieved. Christian character is an indwelling Person.

Those nine beautiful graces that go to make up normal Christian character—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control,—they are all "the *fruit* of the *Spirit.*"[3]

[1]Rom. 6:11 (R. V.). [2]Eph. 4:31. [3]Gal. 5:22-23.

Not one of them is the fruit of the Christian. No Christian can produce any one of those graces, much less all of them, for they constitute the character of Christ, and therefore only he is capable of producing them. But he does produce them in us by the Holy Spirit, when we consent.

Note how his method of doing it leaves the whole responsibility for our character on himself. "We all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory—the character—of the Lord, *are transformed* into the same image from glory—from one level of character—to glory—to another level of character, even as from the Lord the Spirit."[1]

There is nothing here of the "character building" we hear so much of these days. While we behold him, he transforms us. There is no effort here. It is all done by him.

This is what spiritual growth is. We do not do the growing, he does it in us. Christ said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."[2] It is the life of the lily that does the growing. Just so it is Christ in us who does our growing, becoming within us one level of character after another as our capacity for him increases. While we do the beholding, he does the transforming.

(3) Christ himself performs our service.

He does it through us as we yield. He performs through us every bit of spiritual service that is ever done. If he does not do it, it is not spiritual service.

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[1]2 Cor. 3:18 (R. V.). [2]Matt. 6:28.

It is imperative that we take in this great truth, for it is failure to apprehend it that keeps thousands of earnest Christians from active work for the lost. They think they themselves must perform whatever service is done, with Christ re-enforcing them by furnishing whatever they happen to lack. They do not at all grasp the fact that they have nothing and can do nothing, and that whatever is done Christ must do.

Think of the vine and the branches. While the fruit grows on the branches, yet every bit of life that produces it comes from the vine. "From *me* is thy fruit found,"[1] said the Lord in the Old Testament, and Christ illustrates how it is done by this wonderful parable of the vine and the branches, emphasizing the fact that *apart* from him we can do *nothing.*

All our soul-winning, then, *he does* as we let him use us in personal work. The burden of intense and agonized prayer that we feel for some lost soul is *his* yearning through us. The impulse to speak the words we say, no matter how simple they are, is *his* life expressing itself through us. All true spiritual service is according to *his* working, which *worketh in us mightily.*

Do you recall that river of blessing of which Ezekiel writes in the forty-seventh chapter of his prophecy? As soon as it left the temple it started straight for the Dead Sea, healing and making fruitful on its way there all with which it came into contact, except the marshes. Observe! What

[1]Hosea 14:8.

was it that did that healing? Was it the temple, or the waters that flowed from the temple? And when you enthrone Christ in your life, which is his temple, and the rivers of living water begin to flow from your inmost being, as he has promised they should, is it you yourself—the temple, or the waters of life flowing out through your ministry from Christ himself from which the healing comes?

No, child of God, soul-winning is not your work, it is Christ's work through you. And so if you will put into his hand just what you have, whether it is the walking stick of Moses or the five buns and two fishes of the lad, he will fill you and your capacities with his power and perform his pleasure through your life. It isn't your equipment he is after, it is *you,* and when he gets *you* he can do anything he pleases through your equipment, whether much or little. You may be an impulsive fisherman like Peter, or you may be a splendidly cultured and capable scholar like Paul, but the important thing to him is not your equipment, it is *you.* Not that the equipment is a matter of indifference in our service. Far from it. Every one ought to have the very best possible equipment. But whatever of real spiritual service is done *Christ does it,* using our equipment whatever it is.

A splendid illustration of this occurred in an evangelistic campaign the writer conducted in Cleveland, Ohio. The invitation was being given after the sermon, and there were perhaps a score of inquirers standing in front of the pulpit. Down

in the center of the main floor, in view of all, was an electric lineman above forty, under such conviction that he was literally mopping the perspiration from his brow, though the temperature was normal. Many were praying for him. Presently a lad of twenty came from a distant part of the room, sat down by the convicted man, a man who was regarded as a difficult case, and said a few simple words, and the man got right up and came to the front.

Now see how the Holy Spirit brought that about. For months that man had frequently remarked to his wife that he didn't like the thought of so many linemen about his age being killed in their work. That thought was constantly with him. Now with this in view, the Holy Spirit moved that young man—who knew nothing of what the older man had on his mind—to say to him, "You know you have no lease on life. You don't know you'll be alive to-morrow morning. Now come on!" And the man came.

How did that young man know what to say? The Holy Spirit, who knew what he had been impressing for months on the mind of that lineman, told him what to say. And he will impress any one who is yielded to him with what to say to any one to whom he leads him. All he wants is our willingness and he will pour his omnipotence out through our impotence.

By this time the meaning of the crucified life must be fairly clear. In a word, it is utterly turn-

ing our back on everything within us that makes us feel we are something when we are actually nothing, and turning our whole life over to Christ that he may live his own life in us through the Holy Spirit. It is an absolute abandonment of all our ideas, plans, ambitions, methods, possessions—everything that we are and have, that Christ may from henceforth be within us all he requires us to be, and do through us all he requires us to do. It is literally to die to ourselves that he may live within us. This is the life through which Christ can reach the lost.

Now some reader is asking, How can one enter upon such a wonderful life as this? We will therefore seek the answer.

II. The Method of Entering the Crucified Life

Christ said to his disciples, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."[1] He says the same thing to us with added spiritual emphasis. We are to follow him all the way to the cross in order to become fishers of men. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master."[2] He blazed the path, he set the pattern, and he himself is the power to follow.

We shall think first of following Christ to the cross, and then of fellowshiping with him in the cross.

1. Following Christ to the Cross

How may a Christian follow Christ to his cross?

[1]Matt. 4:19. [2]Matt. 10:25.

By dying to self in the same spirit in which he died for the lost. He went to the cross in order that he might be able to save. We must die to self for the same purpose.

There is a uniqueness in his cross that we cannot share. As the sinner's substitute and saviour he is absolutely and eternally alone, being forsaken in the hour of his crucifixion even of his Father.

But as the controlling principle of life, the cross is for every Christian, and we not only can but must follow him here if we are to be made fishers of men.

We must therefore die to everything but the will of God, that thus God's will may come to be done in others through the service of our yielded lives. We must not surrender to God in order that we may be happy. It is true that the crucified life is the only really happy life on earth, but if we seek to enter the life that we may be happy, we shall never enter. Our whole purpose must be, not our own joy, but the salvation of the lost.

THE SACRIFICIAL AND SELFISH PRINCIPLES

There are only two fundamental principles of life to choose between. One is the sacrificial principle, and the other the selfish. And these principles are mutually exclusive. When one dominates the life, the other is driven out. We can never become fishers of men if our lives are dominated by the selfish principle, and the sacrificial principle means the cross.

One of those great passages where this truth is unfolded is the story of events surrounding Peter's great confession of Christ's deity.[1] You recall that after asking the disciples what men were saying about him, doubtless to get their thought centered on himself, he asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?"

Then came Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," after which Christ lifts the veil a bit concerning the things that are before him, and indicates the disciples' relation to them.

Then a most significant thing occurs. *"From that time forth* began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

Why did Christ speak of his coming death at the time when his deity was first recognized and confessed by his disciples? Why not at some time earlier or later? Why just then?

It seems as though he must have done it in order that the disciples might be able to associate his death with his deity in their thought of him, and might always be able to recall that the sacrificial principle lies at the very center of God's being, and is the spring of all his relations with created moral intelligences. The cross was always potential in the heart of God before it became actual in the death

[1] Matt. 16:13-25.

of his Son. Christ was the Lamb of God slain in his purposes from the unbegun beginning. What more natural, therefore, than to connect his death immediately with the disciples' recognition of his deity?

Then Peter, you recall, rebuked him and said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." But Christ turned to Peter and said, "Thou savorest not the things that be of God [the sacrificial spirit], but those that be of men [the selfish spirit]."

THE PROGRAM OF THE CROSS

Then he unfolds both the program and the product of the cross.

"If any man will come after me," he said, let him do three things. Let him first "deny himself," second, let him "take up his cross," and third, let him "follow me." This is the program of the cross. Look at it a moment.

Let him who would come after me "deny himself." What does this mean? Does it have reference to those periods of self-denial that we frequently practise? Far from it! It does not mean denying things to self at all, but denying *self itself*. It means, "let him deny *his self*."

But how can a man deny his self?

Precisely as Peter denied his Lord. He said, "I don't belong to him; I am not one of his company; I have nothing to do with him." And in exactly this same way we are to say to self, "I

don't belong to you; I want your fellowship no longer; I will have nothing more to do with you!" We are to turn our back on self for good. We are from that moment to "make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."[1]

The second thing is "take up his cross." This is where many miss the meaning. Some are so hopelessly mixed on the meaning of the cross that they get it mixed with their burdens and their thorns in the flesh. We sometimes hear some earnest but confused Christian woman say that her cross is an unsaved husband! It may be a grievous burden to her, or a thorn in the flesh that her husband is living a godless life, but it is never her cross. It is those who have this conception that talk about their "crosses." There is no such thing. The word "crosses" cannot be found in the New Testament. There is but one cross.

What does it mean for a Christian to "take up his cross"? What is his cross?

There is only one way to reach the meaning, and that is to find out what the cross was to Christ. For what it was to Christ it will be to us.

It was the *instrument of death* to him. It must also be the instrument of death to us.

But death in what way? Death to what?

Death to the self we have just denied.

Then the third thing he tells us to do is, "Follow me." Here again many earnest Christians are confused. They have the idea that the cross is a

[1]Rom. 13:14.

burden of some sort that we are to shoulder and carry about with us all the rest of our lives, for Christ tells the disciple to take up his cross and follow him, and are we not to follow him through life? This is where the idea comes from that the cross is a burden. But nothing could be farther from the Master's meaning. Study his thought a moment.

Where did he go with his cross? For we are to follow him with our cross to the place where he went with his.

He went with his cross to the *place of death.*

So if we take up our cross and follow him, where shall we go?

To the same place. To the place of death. We can not fail to see that Christ meant this and nothing else, when we put all he said together. Notice just what he said. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself [his self], take up his cross [the instrument of death to make the denial of self effectual], and follow me [to the place of death to self]."

But some one reminds us just here that Christ told us to take up our cross daily.

There is no difficulty here. When we have once accepted that power of the cross into our lives which brings into our experience our crucifixion in Christ in a transaction that is to be once for all, we are then to allow the cross to manifest its power in us daily that we may be daily kept in the place of death, that the life of the risen Christ may work in us and through us unhindered.

Sophie the scrubwoman put it about right in one of her "sermons." She said, "I find dat de only vay to lead de right life is to commit suicide ef'ry day. You haf to die daily und go to your own funeral. You die to mean self, und den you haf to up und die to good self, und de sooner you die, de better you lif."

Now if this exposition of these verses is not correct, then you will have to explain the meaning of the very next verse; for Christ says immediately, "Whosoever will save his life [from the cross] shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life [on the cross] for my sake shall find it."

THE PRODUCT OF THE CROSS

Notice those words, *"shall find it."* This is the product of the cross; and it comes only by following the program of the cross. It is a life yielded to the cross and therefore found again.

Found again how? How can a life that is given up to death on the cross ever be found again?

Christ explains how it is found again in most striking fashion on a later occasion when he says, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."[1] That is, to follow the selfish principle and save the life from the cross is to lose it; but to follow the sacrificial principle and die on the cross is to find it in a vastly multiplied form. This is precisely why we must follow Christ all the

[1]John 12:24.

way through death to self before we can reach the ground where multiplication and fruitage take place. This is what it means to follow him that we may become fishers of men.

Now to sum up the cross principle, it is to lay down a life which may not in itself be wrong, but which, if we live, we shall live alone, in order that, laying it down, we may take it up again in ever-increasing fruitage. This is following Christ to the cross.

2. Fellowshiping With Christ in His Cross

How may we fellowship with Christ in his cross? How may the crucified life become our daily experience?

By faith alone.

Faith means, you recall, that we trust some one else to do for us what we cannot possibly do for ourselves.

Then recall that "the just shall *live* by *faith*,"[1] which means that every minutest activity of the Christian life is performed by another within and through us while we trust.

This means a permanent cessation of all our own doing, for the moment effort comes in at the door, faith flies out at the window. Faith and works can never dwell together in the same heart. When one is in, the other is out.

This means also that we are even to *cease our doing* by faith, and not by effort. That is, we are not to *try* to make self quit its activity, for as long

[1] Rom. 1:17.

as we make any effort whatever it will be impossible for self to quit. As long as we *do* anything to make effective our death to self in Christ, it will be impossible for self to die out of our experience, because it is by our *doing* that self *stays alive*.

Christ, therefore, makes the cross a living experience in our lives by himself being within us the power to cease from self as we trust him, and daily maintaining the death of self by his own life within us.

But the moment we cease to trust him to do even the smallest thing, and start out to do it by our own effort, that moment self comes down from the cross and renews its activity in our lives. The just must live *all the time* by *faith,* and *not a moment* by *effort*. The normal Christian life is the *effortless* life. So if you find it hard to live the Christian life, you are *trying* to live it instead of *trusting him* to live it. The fact is, Christian living is not simply *hard* to a Christian, it is *impossible*. It is a supernatural life, and it therefore takes a supernatural Person to live it.

THE EFFORTLESS LIFE AND SOUL-WINNING

Now all this means that we can trust Christ—yes, that we *must* trust Christ to do every bit of the soul-winning through us that he requires of us, for *he is able* and *we are not*. Paul says that he is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," and then he tells us what he does while we trust when he adds, "according to the

power that *worketh in us.*"[1] Not according to our own power or working, but according to his.

Then in another place Paul tells us how this power puts us above every power that hinders. He speaks of it as "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who *believe* [not to those who make any effort whatever], according to that working of the strength of *his might* [not ours] which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion [then certainly over all our enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil], and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and he put *all things* in subjection under his feet [and therefore under ours] and gave him to be head over all things to the *church,* which is *his body,* the fulness of him that filleth all in all"[2]; all of which means that through *faith* we fellowship with Christ in the literal working in our daily experience of his power over all things.

Then in still another place Paul tells us how the power that puts us above the enemy also works in us the attitude of Christ toward the lost. He tells us how he has suffered the loss of all things, and counts them but refuse, that he might know Christ, "and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made *conformable unto his death.*"[3] You notice that the resur-

[1]Eph. 3:20. [2]Eph. 1:19-23 (R. V.). [3]Phil. 3:10.

rection, in this passage, precedes the sufferings and the death. But you will notice also that it is the *power* of his resurrection that Paul speaks of. This is why it comes first; for it is the power of the *risen* life of the indwelling Christ that works in us perpetual fellowship with his sufferings and death for others.

In one other passage Paul tells us how to receive the crucified life into our experience when he says, "*Let* this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."[1] Could anything be easier than to *let* the mind of Christ possess us? It is like letting air into a vacuum. Simply open a way of entrance, and the air takes possession. And Paul tells us also what the mind of Christ is in the words, "Who, being in the form of God, did not reckon his equality with God a thing to be clung to; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the *death of the cross.*"[2] To open the heart to the mind of Christ, therefore, is to accept his attitude toward death to self that others might live.

The application of all this to soul-winning is most practical. It means two very definite things. It means that by the power of the indwelling life we die to all consciousness of our ability, and also to all consciousness of our lack of ability.

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[1]Phil. 2:5. [2]Phil. 2:6-8 (1911 Bible).

CONSCIOUSNESS OF ABILITY HINDERS

This brings before us a class of workers that it is very hard to get along with. It is those who are conscious of ability, real or imaginary. They may be very modest in manner, though sometimes they are not, but they know little or nothing of what it means to cease from themselves and let Christ do it all. They are among the hardest to work with in any soul-saving effort. All evangelists and evangelistic pastors know them, and they are among the thorns in their flesh in an evangelistic campaign. When a call is made for personal workers these people are not only ready to present themselves, but they frequently seek to push themselves forward. The presence of such people in a congregation sometimes makes it necessary to avoid a public call and pick out workers in private. They are frequently very agreeable, though sometimes this is not true, and are often kind-hearted, and even gifted with a natural ability that is unusual.

But, strange as it may seem, they are utterly unfit for service, for *self dominates them.* One evidence of this is their ill-concealed desire to be at the front. And even if this is not much in evidence, they are always very sensitive and touchy. It is almost impossible to make any corrective suggestions to them, and altogether impossible to ask them to step aside from a piece of work they are bungling, for if that is done they are instantly incensed and offended, sometimes to the point of denunciation and even withdrawal from the work altogether.

WHAT TOUCHINESS SHOWS

This is where they reveal the fact that self dominates. For self is full of pride, and is therefore always easily offended and very touchy. Touchiness is *self-conceit* set with a hair-trigger, ready to go off at the least offense. And everything that even seems to raise the slightest question as to their ability is ample occasion for offense.

With the crucified life it is just the opposite. There isn't any self to be offended, for self is on the cross and Christ lives within. Among the graces named in the fruit of the Spirit is peace, and the Word says, "Great peace have they that love thy law, and *nothing* shall *offend* them."[1] And so if we are offended over being set aside, the fruit of the Spirit is not being borne in our lives, and that means that self dominates.

When the power of the cross is working in our lives, we haven't any ability that we are conscious of to be discredited, for Christ is all, and so our feelings are not hurt in the least if we are not called on for any given service, or if we are asked to step aside from the service we are engaged in. For even though the leader we are working under may be making a mistake, we will not add another one to it by an exhibition of self. We can safely leave the leader with God while we, like our Master, are content to be of *"no reputation,"*[2] and to leave our service altogether with him who said, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."[3]

[1]Psa. 119:165. [2]Phil. 2:7. [3]Luke 14:11.

It is very hard for a self that is conscious of ability to quit and go to the cross, especially if that ability is being conscientiously used in what is believed to be the service of God. Look at Saul of Tarsus. In birth, natural ability, training, position and correct living, he was at least on a level with the best of his day. But in the use of his great ability, in spite of the fact that he lived in all good conscience before God, he was utterly dominated by self. Conscious of his own ability, he rushed on so madly in doing what Saul dictated that he had no ear to hear what God dictated, until God was finally compelled to smite him down by the roadside to make him hear.

But look at the change after he was born from above and so filled with Christ that he no longer lived but Christ lived in him. He calls himself the "chief of sinners,"[1] because although he was given perhaps the greatest advantages of any man of his day, yet he allowed those very advantages to make him so unresponsive to God that he had to have a vision from heaven before he would get his eyes off from his own ambitions and on to Christ.

Notice what he does with his great ability after he is surrendered to Christ. After saying, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more," and then after naming the things in which he might have confidence, he

[1] 1 Tim. 1:15.

says, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ, . . . and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, . . . that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."[1] This means that he died to *all his natural ability and equipment* that he might lose all dependence on them and *depend on Christ alone,* and that thus *Christ might use them* in the power of his risen life. Paul was *nothing;* Christ was *all.*

When those who have any natural ability and training get to this place, they will henceforth be the great joy of all leaders in soul-winning work.

But it is so hard to die to our ability that we cannot do it. But Christ is able, and he will work it in us if we simply consent and reckon on him.

CONSCIOUSNESS OF INABILITY HINDERS

There is also another class that it is equally hard to deal with. It is that great company of Christians who are so painfully conscious of their lack of ability that they will never make the first attempt to take Christ to a lost soul. They are everywhere. Their name is legion. And they are the heartache of many an evangelist and pastor.

They are the quiet but earnest and active Christians who are usually ready for almost any service except personal work. They are self-conscious because they think their natural inability and lack of

[1]Phil. 3:4-10.

equipment and training make them altogether incapable of doing such an important work as that.

But, strange as it may seem, these people also are *dominated by self*. Self has so twisted their vision of God that they have come to have a very strange and impossible God. He is most unreliable, at least in one thing. He will unmistakably move them to speak to certain unsaved souls and seek to lead them to him. By so much, therefore, he is with them. Then he will give them his encouragement and presence all the way to those unsaved souls. And so by that much more he is with them. Then just as they start to say something for their Master to lead these souls to accept him, strangely enough this God of theirs will suddenly back out from under them and leave them altogether to their own resources. Their limited resources are reason enough, therefore, for their never venturing on that work. It must be left to those whose resources are adequate.

Nothing but the activity in our lives of a guilty and sinful self could ever move us so to dishonor our Lord! It is because our eyes are on ourselves and not on him that we are ever capable of thinking such a thing.

When did the Lord ever desert his obedient servant? When did he ever leave us to our own resources in the doing of his work? What has either our ability or lack of ability to do with complete obedience to his commands?

His commands are always his enablings. He is

the God who takes one to chase a thousand and two to put ten thousand to flight. He is the one who can take a worm and thresh a mountain, and use even the things that are not to bring to naught the things that are. He is the God who can use a shout to throw down the battlements of a city, and three hundred pitchers and torches to defeat an army of 135,000. And then we back up when he proposes to use us because *we* lack ability!

We shall have to turn utterly away from this sinful self-consciousness before we shall ever be where God can use us. It makes no difference whether we have ability or inability, the *Lord is able,* and *that is enough! He* will do through us what he requires of us, no matter what our equipment or lack of it.

It is something like this. In your watch are two springs. One is called the main-spring and the other the hair-spring. The hair-spring actuates a little oscillating wheel called the escapement. The escapement for what? For power. For what power? For the power of the main-spring. When does the power of the main-spring begin to escape? Not when the escapement acquires some new or different ability, but simply *when it goes to work!*

Precisely so, Christ's life within us is the main-spring of our life and activity, and we are the escapement for his saving message into the world—that message that is the *power of God* unto salvation to those who believe it. And so just as long

as we refuse to surrender to his power and go to work for the lost, just that long the saving power that is in the message cannot escape through us. But just the moment we go to work for the lost, utterly dependent on him because he is able, just that moment his power will begin to operate through us.

This does not mean in any sense of the word that surrender to him will set aside our personality. He *empowers our personality* and uses just what we are and have. The power of the main-spring does not change the hair-spring, it *uses* it. The electricity does not change the nature or characteristics of the dynamo or the heater in the street-car when it takes possession of them, it acts through them *according to their nature*. So also does the indwelling Christ with us.

This is the attitude toward Christ that puts self out of business so completely that we become entirely unconscious of both ability and inability in our consciousness that Christ is within us all he requires us to *be,* and to *do,* and to *give*.

This is what it means to fellowship with Christ in his cross. It is to surrender to the power of the crucified life within us in a definite and deliberate transaction which we intend shall be both complete and final.

This is not a special blessing once for all received, however, whether "second blessing" or any other, nor a special experience once for all enjoyed, whether "sanctification" or anything else, so much

as it is a normal relationship once for all recognized, accepted and entered upon. This is the normal Christian life. Anything below this is sub-normal

HOW TO ENTER IN

Now you are asking just how to go about it in order to enter upon the enjoyment of this relationship so that you may no longer live, but that Christ may daily live his life in you.

By *faith alone,* and never by *feeling.* For the experience of the life that is Christ does not rest on a thrill of the nervous system but on a fact that faith reckons with. Therefore rest once and for all on the fact and do not look for an experience. You will have experiences, many and blessed, but they will always be the result of the reckoning of faith, and never the outgrowth of feeling. Feeling comes from following, and following is by faith alone entirely apart from feeling.

What is the fact, then, with which faith is to reckon?

The fact that our crucifixion to self does not have to be done at some point of time in our lives when we consent, but that it *has* been done already in Christ when we died in him on the cross, and that therefore we *were* crucified to self, to the world and to Satan the instant we were baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ at the moment of our regeneration. By the Spirit we were then baptized into his death, and by the Spirit we were also then baptized into the power of his risen life. It is therefore

already a fact with which we are to reckon, that we are *now* dead to sin (self), and are *now* living unto God in Christ.

But just how shall we go about it to reckon with this fact? How shall this fact become a living reality in our experience?

Paul tells us when he says, "Let not sin [self] therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."[1]

But how can we prevent sin from ruling over us without making an effort against it? And the moment we begin making an effort does not faith end? Where, then, can the reckoning of effortless faith come in?

Paul solves this mystery of overcoming self without effort before he finishes the sentence. *"Yield* yourselves unto *God,"* he says, "as those that are alive from the dead."[2] Being alive in him we are simply to yield to him who is our life and he himself will not let sin reign over us. It is the fight of *faith,* not the fight of *effort,* because we are simply trusting him to do for us what we are helpless to do for ourselves. That is, while we reckon, he makes the crucifixion of self which was ours in him the moment we believed an actual reality in our experience, thereby setting us free "that we should no longer be enslaved to sin."[3]

In other words, just as the salvation of our souls from the guilt of sin was ours the moment Christ died for us, and became ours in fact the moment

[1]Rom. 6:12. [2]Rom. 6:13. [3]Rom. 6:6.

we reckoned it to be true and accepted it, so the salvation of our lives day by day from the power of sin was ours in Christ's death, and becomes ours in daily experience the moment we reckon that God has told us the truth and accept the fact. The fact of our complete salvation from sin and its power has been true since Calvary. The experience and enjoyment of that fact becomes a glorious reality within us the moment we believe and accept it.

To enter upon this relationship with your Lord is therefore very simple. Get alone with him at a time when there will be nothing to disturb nor break in. Then in a most personal, intimate, and natural way, *yield* yourself, all you are and all you have, all you will ever become and all you will ever have, in a transaction that will from thenceforth put the government of your life upon his shoulder and the doing of your service upon his power. And then from that moment *reckon on him.* Follow him wherever he leads you, trusting him to be in you and to do through you all he requires of you. Never wait for feeling. Always act on faith. The responsibility is all his. Leave it there!

And if self ever slips off the cross and becomes active again, as it surely will when you stop reckoning, confess it instantly, turn self over to him again, and take your former stand on the ground of a faith which lets him do it all because you can do nothing. This is the method both of entering and of continuing in the crucified life.

CHAPTER II

THE OVERFLOWING LOVE OF CHRIST

THE divine power is not only the life of Christ crucified, dwelling in us, it is also the love of Christ risen, working through us.

Among the wonderful things about our salvation, none is more wonderful than the fact that God not only does it all when he saves us, but that he even gives us the faith with which to receive his salvation. "For by grace are ye saved through faith"; he says, "and that [even the faith] not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."[1] He leaves us nothing to do but consent. He does it all.

Now if the faith with which we receive salvation is a gift, and if everything that salvation itself contains is a gift, this means that Christ is the source of all our Christian activity, the center and substance of which is *love*.

Christ gave some intimations of this before he went away. He said to his disciples, "My peace I give unto you."[2] Not a prescription for peace, but *his peace*. He himself was to be their peace, just as he was on the stormy lake, except that he was to be within them instead of simply externally present with them.

[1]Eph. 2:8. [2]John 14:27.

And so with every other grace. Ours, no matter how capable they may seem, always break down under any real test. A Sunday-school Superintendent stood on the platform in an East End Sunday-school in London and saw his teachers practically helpless to keep order as conditions in some classes approached pandemonium. He was just on the point of ringing the bell sharply and saying, "The Sunday-school is dismissed; and don't come back again until you can behave yourselves!" But just before the impulse was yielded to, he suddenly lifted his heart, hardly knowing why he did so, and cried, "Thy patience, Lord; I need it quick!" And immediately a wonderful calm possessed him that gave him perfect patience and poise in the presence of the distracting disorder, and from that moment nothing that happened caused him the slightest feeling of impatience. *His* patience broke down under pressure; the *Lord's* never does.

THE SOURCE OF LOVE FOR THE LOST

The same thing is true of love, which lies at the heart of every Christian grace. The Lord said, not, "Continue ye loving me," but, "Continue ye in *my love*."[1] Peter tried three times to tell the Lord he loved him, and made a miserable failure of it. But John had no trouble telling us that *God loves us,* and Paul tells us that he sheds his love all abroad in our hearts. It is impossible to manufacture sunshine, but it is perfectly easy to get out and

[1]John 15:9.

bask in God's sunshine. We love him because he first loved us. Our love for him is simply his love rising to its source and taking our hearts in on the way.

All those nine graces beginning with love, joy, peace, are after all but love in its various phases. That is why it is called "fruit," not "fruits," for it is one fruit, not nine.

And then love—what is it? Is it a feeling, or an emotion, or a sentiment?

It is none of these things, nor all of them put together. It is infinitely more. It is that deliberate and fixed attitude of the whole being which puts the best interests of the one we love above our own, no matter at what cost to ourselves. And so it is entirely independent of sentiment and emotion, for it lies altogether back of them. Sometimes our emotion may be in perfect harmony with our love, as when a parent gives his child a present, and sometimes it may be utterly against it, as when a parent gives his child a punishment.

HOW TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES

Now the divine love has no respect either for person or character. This is why Christ told us, as Christians, to love our enemies. For when we do that, our love will then reach all those between our worst enemies and our best friends.

But can we do it? Do we love the uncouth and the disgusting? Do we love those who slander us and deliberately seek to injure us? Do we love our

enemies who go about to slay us? Is there a Christian anywhere who is doing it?

Think carefully for a moment what it was that Christ commanded us to do for our enemies. He said, "*Love* your enemies,"[1] but he did not tell us we must *like* them. To like them would imply approval of their character, and that would be impossible with all whose characters were wrong. He himself does not *like* the sinner, though he *loves* him so much that he gave all he had to save him. For love puts the best interests of the one we love above our own, no matter at what cost to ourselves, and this is what Christ did for his enemies, and what we are to do for ours.

But we cannot do even that, reasonable and simple as it sounds. No human being can love his enemy, even on that basis. When Christ commanded a thing like that, he commanded an absolute human impossibility. But he who prayed, "Father, forgive them,"[2] while they were driving the nails through hands and feet can do it, and by his indwelling life *we can do it,* because he is able to do it through us.

And we never can know the joy of loving until we love our enemies in the power of his love. There is infinitely more joy in loving our worst enemies with the love of Christ, than there ever can be in loving our best friends with our own love. That medieval saint had experienced this joy when he said, "It is so sweet to love my enemies that if it

[1]Matt. 5:44. [2]Luke 23:34.

were a sin to do so, I fear I should be tempted to commit that sin."

Now the love of Christ going out through us for the lost cannot leave us in a state of inactivity nor the lost in a state of indifference. We *must* act under its impulse, and they *must* respond to it, even if it is to reject it. And so when the love of Christ has possession of us, it will both impel us and compel the lost to action.

I. The Love of Christ Impels the Christian

After all that has been said about how Christ lives his own life within the yielded disciple through the Holy Spirit, we can now understand how Christ's love will impel us to go after the lost precisely as it impelled him. We are also prepared to see that if we are not doing this, it is because his life is being suppressed within us by our unwillingness to yield to it.

Now we can go on to the further truth that such an active outgoing of our lives for the lost as his love impels is the life risen with Christ. When Joseph of Arimathea put a grave into his garden in which he who went to the cross for the lost was buried, he very soon had a resurrection there. And when a grave goes into the garden of our hearts in which self is buried and all that belongs to it, we will also share the resurrection life and fruitful activity of our Lord.

We shall study what the risen life is and what it does within us.

1. Christ's Risen Life Overcomes

When Christ spoke of the death of the grain of wheat, he went on immediately to speak of its resurrection and fruitage. Death was not the goal; it was simply the pathway to the goal.

This is a truth many miss. They are deterred from surrender to the cross because they do not see what is beyond it. They see only the seeming loss involved in crucifixion, and do not see the resurrection life and fruitage on the other side. The cross seems to them not the beginning but the end of all that is worth while.

But when Christ was on his way to the cross he saw through to the other side, and seeing "the *joy* that was set before him" on the resurrection side, he "endured the cross" willingly, looking down upon the shame as a thing not to be reckoned with, and is now "set down at the right hand of the throne of God."[1] And what he saw on the resurrection side he will cause us to see, if we will let him touch our eyes into spiritual vision. Right here is the secret of getting joy out of sacrifice. We need to see the cross principle, but that is only half of it. It takes the resurrection principle to complete the truth.

TWOFOLD SALVATION

This twofoldness of Christ's salvation is seen everywhere in Scripture. He saves us both out of, and into. By his cross he saves us out of self; by his resurrection he saves us into service. By his cross we die to fruitlessness; by his resurrection we

[1]Heb. 12:2.

rise to fruitage. By his cross is ended that spirit of lovelessness that lets the lost all around us go into eternity without a direct effort to save them; by his resurrection is begun that active operation of the divine love within us that impels us to spend our lives in rescuing the lost. Salvation is twofold; not so much a first and second blessing as a twofold blessing; not so much a first and second work of grace as a twofold work of grace. The cross and the resurrection are always associated in New Testament doctrine, and they cannot be separated in the Christian's experience. It is impossible for the power of the cross to enter the life without the power of the resurrection to be manifest also. While we are discussing the crucified and risen life separately, this does not imply separate experiences. They are the two sides of one great truth.

It is quite true that one may receive the *benefits* of Christ's death and resurrection *for* him when he believes unto salvation, and may not receive the *power* of Christ's death and resurrection *within* him until a later day in his experience, though this does not need to be so. But when the power of the cross becomes a living reality in a Christian's life, the power of the resurrection is inseparable from it.

SATAN CANNOT TOUCH US

Now the risen life in Christ is the overcoming life. By the power of the cross we die to the enemy, and by the power of the resurrection we

rise above the enemy. Satan cannot touch either the sonship of the saved one or the service of the surrendered one. The soul of the believer is forever safe in Christ, and the service of the soul-winner is beyond his reach in Christ.

It is because our life is hid with Christ in God that it is beyond the reach of Satan. As some one has put it, "Satan cannot touch our life in its source, for God is its source and he cannot touch God. He cannot touch our life in its channel, for the risen Christ is its channel, and he cannot touch the risen Christ. He cannot touch our life in its power, for the Holy Spirit is its power, and he cannot touch the Holy Spirit. He cannot touch our life in its duration, for eternity is its duration, and he cannot touch eternity. And he cannot touch our life in its sphere, for heaven is its sphere, and he cannot touch heaven. The child of God is eternally safe in Christ."

Moreover, Satan cannot touch the service of those who have gone by way of the cross into the risen life in the heavenlies with Christ. That working of the strength of the Father's might which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and put all things under his feet, is also "the exceeding greatness of his power *to usward who believe*"—who *live by faith* —by which we are made to fellowship with Christ in *his power* over all the enemy. And so when Satan and the world call after us, their call must

come through the grave of Christ to reach us, and it is too muffled to hear. And when self makes its appeals to us and thunders its intimidations at us, we are dead to self and do not heed. All those weak and childish excuses for our selfish and criminal unwillingness to go after the lost which come from the enemy are therefore things of the past. And so when we experience the power of his resurrection in our lives, we will be in the place where *nothing the enemy can do* can deter or hinder us in the least from the work of soul-winning.

Let every Christian assuredly know, therefore, that if there is anything whatever that is hindering him from this work, he is not experiencing the power of Christ's resurrection in his life, and by that much he is under the enemy's dominion.

But there is no need for any Christian to be the tool of the world, the slave of the flesh, and the football of the devil. Paul tells us in Galatians 5:17, as Rotherham translates it, "For the flesh coveteth against the Spirit, but the Spirit against the flesh,—for these unto one another are opposed, lest whatsoever things ye chance to desire, these ye should be doing!" And he says this in explanation of the previous statement, "By Spirit be walking, and fleshly coveting ye will in no wise fulfill."

Dr. F. B. Meyer tells about going down in a diving bell. The passengers sat on a seat fastened on the inside of the bell. When they were lowered, the water came up into the inside of the bell

a few inches and then stopped, because the air held it down. The water was fighting against the air, but the air was also fighting against the water, so that it could not do what it otherwise would. And the passengers did nothing but accept and enjoy the victory of the air over the water.

Thus it is with every Christian who turns everything over to his Lord. The life of the risen and indwelling Christ makes constant conquest over the flesh, and as long as the activity of the flesh is nullified by the life of Christ within us, neither the world nor Satan has any entrance into our lives, and therefore no power over them.

This means that *we are free for service.* And so nothing the enemy can do can hinder us from a life of soul-winning.

2. Christ's Radiant Love Overflows

When we are set free for service, we are in the place where all effective witnessing for Christ is done. Our lives will furnish the indispensable background for our testimony, and our testimony will be "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."[1] When the enemy loses his control over our lives, we can witness with great persuasiveness to those whom the enemy is holding captive at his will. For the doctrine of the cross becomes surpassingly persuasive when illustrated by crucified lives, and the truth of the resurrection becomes gloriously triumphant through those who are transfigured by the risen life in Christ.

[1] 1 Cor. 2:4.

And when it comes to witnessing to Christ, instead of hesitating to take the Gospel to all the lost in our personal worlds, *we cannot be kept from it.* We shall not go after the lost because we are commanded to, but *because we cannot help it.* We shall never run *before* we are sent, but we shall always go *when* we are sent. And if the enemy tries to prevent us from speaking in Christ's name —as he surely will, we shall turn him over to his Victor and go right on with our testimony. For the love of Christ will so constrain us—so bear us along and impel us—that we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

When a disciple is possessed and dominated by the life of the risen Lord, he cannot keep still about him. And all the powers of earth and hell cannot make him keep still. He will go through every condition and brave every difficulty to tell about him.

What an effect a little first-hand fellowship with the risen Christ had on those Emmaus disciples! There flamed within their hearts a strange and wonderful fire, even before they knew him, as they listened while he unfolded the Word by the way. And when they realized that he was their risen Lord, that moment they forget everything else and started out with the story, "He is risen!"[1] They had just walked seven miles and a half from Jerusalem, but though night was now on, their weariness and the dangers of the road disappear as

[1]Luke 24:34.

they hurry back over the same rocky road with their resurrection message. They had come into personal fellowship with the risen Christ, and the power of his resurrection had so transformed their lives that they could not wait till morning to tell the story of his triumph over death.

Now if a short period of personal fellowship with the risen Christ has such an effect as this, what about the effect on those into whose lives the risen Christ comes as an abiding Presence? If the news was so good to those disciples that they must tell it in spite of weariness and danger and everything else that could hinder, what about those in whose lives the power of his resurrection is a daily experience? If you can keep still about the Son of God, you give no evidence of any experience of his resurrection power in your life, and that means you are not surrendered to him. When you are living in the power of his risen life and walking in daily triumph over all the power of the enemy, it will be news too good to keep, and you will go everywhere telling it. It is hard enough to keep bad news, but when it comes to good news it is impossible to keep it. If the Gospel is really *Gospel—good news*—to you, you cannot keep from telling it. If you are not telling it, it is not good news to you!

It is something like this. Touch the keys of an organ and it refuses to speak—as many Christians do. It has the breath within it, as much as there is in the room around, just as those who have been

born again have within them the breath of life; but it does not speak. Now turn the power on, and every joint is strained and the whole organ cries out, Give me a chance to speak! In the same way will a Christian cry out when the power of the risen life has taken possession of him. Touch him on any side and he will speak of him who is mighty to save.

Right here is the supreme need of Christians everywhere to-day! There can be no glad, spontaneous obedience to the Great Commission until the power has been turned on. Then they will be like Jeremiah when he said, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a *burning fire* shut up in my bones, and I was *weary with forbearing,* and I *could not stay.*"[1] Even when he tried to keep still, he could not do it.

Dr. Chalmers visited a dying infidel in Glasgow twenty-one times and was refused admission every time. But at the twenty-second visit the infidel invited him in, because he wanted to see the man who could be refused twenty-one times and still keep coming. And then Dr. Chalmers had a chance to tell the dying man of him who can save. What if he had not continued calling! What if he had not been yielded to that indwelling one who kept him calling!

A lady was calling on a minister's wife. She was told of a cultured family near by, none of

[1]Jer. 20:9.

whom ever went near church, and she said, "I will go and see them."

"What excuse will you offer for calling?" asked the minister's wife. "Oh, yes; take this book," she said. "I remember hearing one of the young ladies express a desire to read it."

"But I don't want any excuse," said the caller. "I want them to know I am interested in them."

That visit resulted in the conversion and church-membership of three of them, and the regular church attendance of all of them.

In speaking of it afterward, the mother said, "I never realized the danger we were in until I saw some one else—and that one a stranger—was concerned about me."

Oh, for multiplied thousands of Christians through whose lives the radiant love of Christ is constantly flowing out to the lost!

Now we shall study the effect of God's love on the sinner.

II. The Love of Christ Compels the Sinner

Contact with the love of Christ compels action. It is absolutely impossible to remain indifferent in its presence. Response of some kind is as certain as response in nature to the action of the sun.

But the response which love compels is not all of one kind. It is of two opposite kinds, with no middle ground between. The soul that feels the love of Christ will respond either with a melting heart or with antagonism. Antagonism may

change under pressure of love to the broken and the contrite heart, but indifference is impossible. Christ's love *compels* to one action or the other.

Every true Christian wishes most devoutly that all hearts might be compelled to melt under pressure of the divine love, but so long as man can act in free will, he will be able to reject God's grace, in spite of all that even God himself can do to melt his heart to love.

1. Love Compels Some to Rejection

The lost want to be let alone in their sins. They have no desire to have conscience aroused, for its action is painful and intensely unwelcome. The demons of Christ's day on earth cried, "Let us alone,"[1] and this is the cry of the sinners of all ages. This is precisely why the lost never *will* come to church until the miracle of Christ's compelling love draws them there.

And Satan wants the lost to be let alone, and so he fills their time with everything that will crowd Christ out, and then keeps Christians from taking the Gospel to them.

But love cannot let the sinner alone, any more than light can let darkness alone. This is why Christ, in love, commissioned every Christian to bring men everywhere face to face with his yearning love, and this is why those who are filled with that love cannot help going with it to all the lost about them. Love simply cannot let the sinner alone.

[1]Mark 1:24.

But the moment the pressure of Christ's love is brought to bear on the sinner, an issue is drawn. He must make a choice between two opposites. He must either crown Christ or crucify him. He cannot remain passive when the issue has once been drawn.

Right here is the supreme reason why we are commanded to be filled with Christ's love by the filling of the Spirit before we go to the lost. Because if the testimony to Christ's love is presented apart from the exhibition of it in our lives, the lost are more likely to be antagonized than they are to melt. There will be some who will reject it in spite of its utmost exhibition, as they did when they were face to face with it in Christ himself, but what an unspeakable crime to presume to go to the lost when we are not filled with Christ's love! And what a more terrible crime yet to be so devoid of his love that we do not go after them at all!

Now if the lost reject the appeal of Christ's love when it comes to them through a love-filled life, they will treat those who present the appeal as they did the Son of God himself. His presence in the midst of wilful sinners stirred up an accusing and condemning conscience, and therefore caused them the most terrible and unmitigated pain known to the experience of sinful moral beings, and they fought him off. And so when he sought to do them good, they went about to do him harm. When he poured his blessings on them, they spewed out

their curses on him. When he lavished upon them his unmeasured love, they let loose on him their sullen hatred. His pity brought nothing but scorn, his compassion nothing but cruelty, and his loving-kindness nothing but fiendish outrage.

This is why the love-filled Christian, living with Christ in the heavenlies and seeking to save the lost, is sure to suffer the contradiction of persistent sinners. This is why "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution."[1] And this is why the Christian who is not suffering persecution for righteousness' sake gives no evidence of a godly and love-filled life.

The aggressive and Christ-filled soul-winner, therefore, need not be surprised at persecution as though some strange thing had overtaken him, for those who refuse the appeal of Christ's love can do nothing else. Rejected love literally *compels* those who reject it to make every possible effort to quench its appeal.

2. *Love Compels Some to Acceptance*

There are some, however, who yield, thank God! And when the lost break under the appeal and yield to his love, how it melts them! Nothing else can do it like the love of Christ.

Our sympathy, *our* kindness, *our* love will never melt a sinner, but *Christ's will.* What a tragedy when they cannot see it in us! What a glorifying of our risen Lord when they can! Do you see why

[1] 2 Tim. 3:12.

it is that we must follow Christ all the way to the cross and to resurrection ground before we can have much success in soul-winning? For it is only when we get here that we can literally *compel* them to come in. Perhaps we can best see why in the light of some illustrations from life.

Dr. J. W. Mahood says that when he was pastor in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, there was a little woman in his church in humble circumstances. She did not have much of what people call social standing; she kept a boarding-house. She had a number of young people boarding with her, and it was nothing unusual for her to say at the close of a noon meal, "Before you return to your work, let us kneel down and ask God's blessing." And she would kneel with them and pray for each one by name.

One day there came to her a book agent who was not a Christian, and this woman discovered it and set about to win her to Christ. At the close of a meal she said, "Now before you go to your rooms, let us kneel down and have prayer," and she prayed for each one about the table until she came to the young lady book agent, and then she prayed that she might become a Christian.

When they rose, the young lady was in tears. This woman put her arms about her and said, "This is the soul I want for my Jesus," and drew her into another room and got down on her knees and pointed her to Christ, and that young woman was saved.

She was always doing something like that. She used to say to Dr. Mahood that she kept a boarding-house to pay expenses, but her business was to win souls to Christ. She was impelled by that love that compels the lost to come in.

The late Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman has told the story that not far from his home in Indiana, just across the state line in Ohio, there lived an old woman who was the terror of all who had ever seen or heard of her. She was finally arrested and sent to Columbus Penitentiary.

She broke every rule of the institution, and they exhausted every form of punishment upon her. Times without number they had sent her to the dungeon, and for weeks at a time she lived on bread and water.

Finally an old Quaker lady from the same part of the state asked permission to see her. The prisoner was led into her presence with chains upon her hands and feet. With downcast eyes she sat before the messenger of Christ.

The old Quaker lady simply said, "My sister."

The old woman cursed her, and then she said, "I love you."

With another oath the prisoner said, "No one loves me!"

Then the Christian woman came near, and taking the sin-stained face in both her hands, she lifted it up and said, "I love you, and Christ loves you."

Then she kissed her first upon one cheek and then upon the other, and that broke the sinner's heart. Her tears began to flow like rain. She rose to her feet, and they took the chains off, and until the day of her death they were never put on again; but like an angel of mercy she went up and down the corridors of the prison ministering to the wants of others, a trophy of the compelling love of Christ.

A QUESTION OF ETERNAL MOMENT

One question only remains. *Will you go?* He has commanded it; he will enable you. *Do you dare refuse?*

A young woman barely escaped with her life from the Chicago fire. After she was in safety she began to sob and moan. Those around her assured her that she was perfectly safe, and asked her why she wept.

She said, "Yes, I know I am safe, but I didn't save anybody else!"

Then they said to her, "How could you? You just barely escaped with your own life."

"Yes," she said, "I know that, but I didn't even try!"

It weighed upon her mind until they finally took her to the insane asylum moaning, "I didn't even try! I didn't even try!"

"Must I go and empty handed,
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give him,
Lay no trophies at his feet?"

"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth *much fruit.*"[1]

"Abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be *ashamed* before him at his coming."[2]

Dr. W. Leon Tucker tells of how, in New York City, there was a great street demonstration in which twelve thousand people marched. The most remarkable thing in the procession was three sight-seeing motor cars packed full of men, women and children. In one of them was a Judge of the Court of Appeals, and in the last one was a ragged street boy.

On the sides of the cars it said, "These people have all been saved from burning buildings by New York City firemen," and then back of the cars marched the men who had saved them wearing their medals, while hundreds of thousands of people cheered them.

Think of the eternal joy that will thrill the hearts of those who, following their Lord and disregarding the consequences, have spent their lives "pulling men out of the fire"[3]!

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[1]John 15:5. [2]1 John 2:28. [3]Jude 23.

APPENDIX

THERE are added here a few pages on the practical outworking of the New Testament Program of soul winning.

As to the mechanics of the program, they are simplicity itself. First, the division of the field into sections from the size of a city block up. Then team work in finding the lost by a census of the field. Then the allocation of those who need Christ or should bring their church letters, as revealed by the census, to volunteers who will accept and work with them until the work is finalized, except where it comes to be seen that some one else can do more effective work with some of them than they.

That which is of the utmost moment in this work, however, is not the mechanics but the *dynamics.* All the mechanics in the world will avail nothing apart from the power from on high. This work must be done, not by might, nor by power, but the *Holy Spirit.* The wheels are necessary, but *the Living Spirit must be within the wheels before they will bear the lost to God!* Therefore, *prayer! prayer!! prayer!!!* There may be some things we can overdo in this work, but prayer is not one of them. And so everything that is done must be *saturated with the spirit of prayer.* And then as the members go out into the homes of the lost in

the field, the Holy Spirit will go before them, and such conviction of sin will result that many will be won to Christ in their own homes, and many others will come to church because they cannot stay away, and the pastor's sermons will prove to be the weekly climax of the work that is being constantly done throughout the field by consecrated soul-winners.

A present-day example of how marvelously effective this method of work may become is outlined in a story of a great work in the First Baptist church of Lowell, Massachusetts, which appeared in the "Watchman-Examiner" of April 19, 1917. This story is so practical that it is repeated here.

"During the two and a half years in which the Rev. Arthur C. Archibald has been pastor of the First Baptist Church, Lowell, Mass., there has been a remarkable growth and development of the church in every respect. The missionary offerings have increased 50 per cent, the Sunday-school has gained 35 per cent, making its present enrollment more than 1,200. Six hundred and forty-six new members have been received into the church, 420 of them within the last year, the present membership of the church being 1,670. During this period no evangelist has been called in, and no special meetings have been held, the great ingathering resulting, as far as human agencies are concerned, from the enlisting of the members of the church in the work of definite, personal evangelism.

"The first thing was the careful listing of every man, woman and child in the city not identified with any other church, and actually or constructively within the bounds of the field of the First Church. This list was obtained in many ways—from the pastor's visiting list, from the Sunday-school roll, from cards distributed at the services, from information secured from the neighbors, and in other ways. The great thing was that when the pastor was ready to start his church out on its new campaign he knew the constituency upon which it was to work. There was nothing indefinite and haphazard about the venture.

"The next thing was to put up a challenge to the church, which he did about a year ago. 'One hundred and fifty new members for the First Church to be won in ten weeks' was the slogan sounded. To accomplish this he called for one hundred volunteers. Sixty-five responded to the first call, and the required number was secured through a little personal pressure. This year when the call was made for 150 for a similar work, all but three of the original one hundred responded at once, and there were 75 others ready to enlist. Says the pastor, 'Those who go through a work of this character are eager for it a second time. They know the taste of victory, and it is sweet. Their own souls are mightily edified.' These volunteers constituted a 'Crusaders League of Soul-Winners,' entering into a covenant 'to make an honest effort

to win one soul to Christ and the church, to win that soul before a certain date (this year April 8), and to work under assignment of and in co-operation with the pastor.' To each crusader a certain number of names were assigned by the pastor, together with cards to be filled with information secured as a result of the visits made, and declaration cards to be signed when the persons visited had made their decision. The first call was supposed to be made within a week after the assignment and the information received sent at once to the pastor, who was thus able to know all the time just what work was being done, and by whom. The declaration cards when signed were returned to the pastor, who called at once upon the new convert to encourage and strengthen him in his decision, and urge him to unite with the church. The calls of the crusaders were not formal and perfunctory. They were distinctly and directly religious. Each worker was impressed with the fact that he was on the King's business with regard to those to whom he was sent. A name given to one was never given to another unless the first requested it, or until he had done his best to persuade the person named to accept Christ. Thus each was made to feel deeply his personal responsibility in the matter. In the course of the visitation many were found who had formerly been identified with the church, but who had lost interest and whose membership had lapsed. These were encouraged to re-

turn to the Lord, and to secure their church letters or unite with the First Church by experience.

"The campaign covered a definite period—ten weeks. During this time the Sunday morning sermons were directed mainly to the thought of the relationship of Christians to the unsaved world, while those of the evening were warmly evangelistic. The city was divided into seven districts, with a neighborhood prayer-meeting in each district every Tuesday night. At the regular prayer-meeting on Friday night the workers were expected to be present with the converts secured by them during the week for public profession of their faith.

"Last year the ten weeks of campaigning ended in May, and instead of the 150 new members constituting the objective, on a single Sunday 174 members were received into the church! This year the effort was timed to terminate April 8—Easter Sunday. The objective was still the same, but the overrun was even larger—225! Of this number 208 were present to receive the hand of fellowship, the others being detained for various reasons.

"The scene on Easter Sunday will not soon be forgotten. The house was packed to its utmost capacity. Before his sermon Pastor Archibald baptized 24 children from the Sunday-school, the 'lambs of the flock' held for baptism until this time, the adults having been baptized on previous Sundays. The associate editor of the 'Watchman-Examiner' had the privilege of saying a few words of

greeting and admonition to the new members, who rose and stood before him, a good-sized church in themselves. About 80 per cent of the number were adults, about equally divided between men and women. Fifty-one were young men. There were 27 husbands and wives, and five whole families, and in seven instances more than two adults came from one family. It was a stirring sight, but not more so than that of the standing together of the band of Crusaders, nearly 150 in number, who rose to receive a message of appreciation and exhortation from the pastor. Happy the pastor who can look on such a company of workers as that! Blessed the church with such a corps of workers!

"In the return of the information cards those which represent cases apparently hopeless are not thrown aside, but are carefully filed away for the next campaign. Mr. Archibald asserts that a most valuable feature of this method of work is that, 'so far from exhausting the field of possible additions, each successive campaign enlarges it and makes it ready for another campaign to follow. Visitation in homes where there is little or no interest awakens attention and gradually wins to church attendance, and so prepares many for a future appeal who were entirely unready to respond at the first approach. Scores have been received into the church in the present effort who one year ago were utterly unmoved.' As to the effect of this kind of work on the church itself he says: 'The church has risen

to a consciousness of its own inherent strength. You cannot persuade the people of the First Church to-day to send for an evangelist, for they know what they themselves can do. They are ready to respond to any task, for for two years they have found that they have been able to do what at one time they thought was impossible. This method has exhilarated the whole church life."

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that what Christ commanded in the Great Commission is *individual* work for *individuals*. An organization called the Church cannot discharge the obligation to obey the Great Commission resting on *each individual Christian*.

Therefore, if the church to which you belong is not helping every member to get into this work by a systematic division of territory and labor, that in no wise relieves you of your responsibility. You must go in person after lost men and women and seek to lead them to Christ, or live in perpetual disobedience to your Lord. Others are going. The Lord will enable you.

A Sunday School Times stenographer made a list of about twenty acquaintances, and went after them and won them for Christ.

A girl thirteen years old led ten of her companions into the inquiry room during a three weeks' evangelistic meeting which the writer conducted in Hamilton, Canada.

A salesman who was in many of the meetings of

a campaign conducted by the writer in Dr. Russell H. Conwell's church in Philadelphia, had at that time led five thousand and eighty-six to Christ. Several of the converts of the meetings resulted from his work.

You can go after the lost too. And you will, if the love of God fills and impels you. Sophie the scrubwoman said, "Some people said they saw me talking to a wooden Indian outside a cigar store. That might be so, I don't know. My eyesight is poor. But that ain't so bad as being a wooden Christian that never talks for Jesus at all."

But you say, "I don't know how." Neither does any one else when they start out. In one of Dr. Torrey's meetings in England he was insisting that the only way to learn how to do personal work is to do it. Afterwards an earnest Christian man said, "Why, that's exactly where I have been making my mistake. For years I have had an intense desire to be able to deal personally with men and women and point them to Christ; but on every occasion when the opportunity has presented itself, I have shrunk back, thinking I was unqualified for the work, and making way for those who appeared to have a special gift in this direction. Now I see that they must have begun just where I must begin —without any practical experience. After this I am going to take the very first chance I get to speak with an inquirer, and trust God for the guidance and wisdom necessary." No one can ever learn to

do personal work in any way except to start out and do it, as God leads.

But you say again, "I have no opportunity." But you do! They are all about you. Dr. Howard W. Pope tells a story that illustrates this fact.

Holding meetings in California, he said at one of the services that he believed every Christian had both the ability and the opportunity to bring Christ to the lost. At the close of the service a woman came to him and objected that she was a poor, hard-working widow, with several children dependent on her, and that she had neither time nor opportunity to do such work.

Dr. Pope asked: "Do your neighbors never call to see you?" "Rarely." "Does the grocer call?" "Yes." "Is he a Christian?" "I don't know." "Does the milkman ever call at your house?" "Yes, every day." "Is he a Christian?" "I don't know whether he is or not, and I don't consider it my business to ask him, either," and the woman went away very angry. She couldn't rest very well after she went to bed that night, and finally determined she would make it her business to find out whether these men were saved.

The next morning the milkman ran up the steps, emptied his pail, started to run out, when the woman gasped, "Milkman!" "Oh, an extra quart to-day?" emptying another quart into the pail. "Oh, no, but are you a Christian?" The man turned on her with a look she never forgot. "No,

and I don't care a fig about being one, either. Do you remember the meetings held last winter? Well, I was interested then, and if I had been invited would have attended. Someway, I thought perhaps you would like to talk to me about it, but you didn't, and no one seemed to care whether I was a Christian or not, and now I tell you I don't care. I have lost all interest in those things," and he turned on his heel and ran down the steps.

The poor woman threw herself prostrate upon the floor and in agony of spirit promised her Lord if he would forgive her past neglect she would never let another opportunity pass without speaking a word for her Master.

When Dr. Pope called two years later to hold meetings again she related her experience and added:

"Six of the seven men that call regularly at my home in a business way are Christians; all have been converted during these two years—all but the milkman."

Christian, some one is waiting right now for you to go to them with the story of salvation. And the one who died for you—and for *them*—is waiting for you to go. He has commanded it. He will enable you. Will you go?

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